OBAMA'S MESSAGE TO MUSLIMS • JUAN COLE

THE Nation.

OUT OF REACH

IS COLLEGE ONLY FOR THE RICH?

LIZA FEATHERSTONE
THE EDITORS

JUNE 29, 2009
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Letters

Greider: An American Dream

Rancho Santa Margarita, Calif.
Every so often a writer presents ideas so intelligent and well articulated as to touch a place deep inside that cries yes, yes and yet again, yes ["The Future of the American Dream," May 25]! Thank you, William Greider, for a very thoughtful analysis.
Barbara Fisher

Phoenix
William Greider's article (excerpted from his wonderful book) is a moving clarion call. Unfortunately, not for all. As a white heterosexual male with no disabilities, I have enjoyed a life free of prejudice, and I did not question its benefits until I quit the corporate world three years ago. Stepping out of the lifestyle Greider so thoroughly derides was illuminating and frightening and has, thankfully, been deeply satisfying. I can attest that the benefits Greider outlines are real; I now have time for activism, volunteering, reading, gardening and reflection. But I feel there is much more work for America to do in addressing entrenched inequalities. For I cannot imagine where I'd be if my origins, color, sexual preference or educational environment had been different. I can imagine being a marginalized, educationally underserved black person wondering how Greider can suggest that his vision is available to all.

I believe that a call to service must be added to Greider's goals for those who step away from the pursuit of riches. Surely this would increase the chances of success of the government intervention he has outlined.
Craig Randleman

Berkeley, Calif.
I share Greider's vision of a society that saves itself from collapsing by putting a premium on human pursuits other than consumption. He states, however, one erroneous assumption several times—that scarcity and deprivation are behind us. We are facing a resource depletion crisis that will make the current financial crisis look like the good ol' days. Oil, gas, water, metals, topsoil—you name it, and the world will soon not have enough of it to meet the demands of a rapidly growing population.

Alongside the cultural and philosophical shifts Greider dreams of, we need to focus (quickly!) on some serious problems, such as how to feed 7 billion people without fossil-fuel-based fertilizers, pesticides, farm equipment and trucks. Greider calls for full employment, but as resources dwindle, unemployment must soar. What will a post-carbon society look like? I'm not sure, but we had better start envisioning and building it rather than allowing the end of oil to catch us unprepared. Greider and other liberal/progressive economists such as Paul Krugman need to acknowledge natural resource constraints in their analyses (as even Thomas Friedman has done).
Erica Etelson

Plainview, N.Y.
For years I worked in New York City at a high-paid job that required me to put in eleven- or twelve-hour days, work at home and call in on weekends. One day I realized my kids were almost grown up, and I switched to a job about five miles from my house. My hour-and-a-half commute became about ten minutes; my hours were 9 to 5; I got back five to six hours a day. The downside was that my salary was cut in half. But I look at the new job as winning the lottery. I may not be able to rush out to buy that big-screen TV, but I can walk into my daughter's room and chat about *Lost*, *Heroes* or college. *Now* I have the American Dream.
Michael Clay

Fort Wayne, Ind.
I found William Greider's article uplifting. I am a high school social studies teacher caught up in the struggle of 108 teachers being laid off in my school district because of the economy and not saved by Obama's stimulus plan. I'm one of the lucky ones. I've still got my job.

So Greider cheered me up, for a while. I got into his daydreams. I liked the first

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A Bailout for Students

In May, tens of thousands of young Americans turned in their last exams, collected their college diplomas and commenced… a lifetime of debt. According to the Project on Student Debt, two-thirds of four-year college students graduate with loans averaging almost $22,000 per borrower. Many face much higher levels of debt—more than $100,000—on which they pay interest rates as high as 19 percent.

EDITORIAL

In an ordinary economy, $22,000 might be manageable, though the pressure to pay it back would still push young people into more lucrative professions instead of fields like teaching, journalism, the arts or civil service. But this is no ordinary economy; the unemployment rate is 9.4 percent, wage growth has crashed and recent grads face the unappetizing prospect of competing against their parents for low-paying jobs to make their college loan payments, which start six months after graduation. Unsurprisingly, the default rate on federally guaranteed student loans has spiked to a ten-year high. That's bad news for the Treasury but worse for borrowers: these loans cannot be discharged in bankruptcy, so lenders will claim their pound of flesh by garnishing wages. If that fails, Social Security checks are fair game down the road.

The system is clearly broken. Student loans should create opportunities for the young, not cripple them for life, making them less able to save, own a home, start a business, obtain credit, continue education or retire. No wonder that each year 400,000 qualified high school graduates do the math and choose not to go to four-year colleges. This amounts to a crisis not just for students but for our entire society, as Liza Featherstone notes in this week's cover story.

President Obama has spoken of our nation's responsibility to "make sure that people who have the grades, the desire and the will, but not the money, can still get the best education possible." He has proposed a modest but elegant plan to get us on track toward that goal. It increases the Pell Grant program for the neediest students and makes it a federal entitlement with annual hikes tied to inflation, thereby creating year-to-year certainty for recipients. Obama plans to pay for this by eliminating the wasteful Federal Family Education Loan program and streamlining the student loan system. Currently, under FFEL, the feds guarantee 97 percent of a private student loan, making it a virtually risk-free bonanza for lenders, who collect upfront fees and interest. Obama proposes cutting out the banks and expanding federal direct lending, saving $94 billion over the next ten years. It's a common-sense proposal—one the banks have declared war on, launching an army of lobbyists to push counterproposals and make misleading claims, such as that direct lending would "eliminate your ability to choose," as a letter from bailout recipient Citigroup to its student borrowers asserted.

Obama's plan would improve the bottom line only slightly for most students. It does nothing to contain the spiraling cost of college; even with Obama's boost, Pell Grants will cover a far smaller portion of college costs than they once did. And Obama has yet to take up the Rev. Jesse Jackson's proposal that the government lend to students at a 1 percent interest rate, higher, it should be noted, than the rate (0.5 percent) it currently extends to banks. Still, by creating a federal entitlement to financial aid and cutting out private lenders, Obama's plan removes the two greatest obstacles to the dream of higher education for all: a Congress full of deficit hawks and a banking industry intent on preserving corporate welfare.

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William Greider: Bankers declare victory
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Obama's Mideast Reset

In the Middle East the American presidency has gone from being pelted with shoes to receiving a standing ovation. President Obama addressed the Muslim world from Cairo on June 4, attempting to reverse the plummeting popularity of the United States in the vast zone stretching from Morocco to Indonesia. His serene, common-sense address pleased mainstream Muslims but elicited howls of outrage from Al Qaeda and the Israeli right wing and skeptical dismissals from Iranian and Hezbollah leaders. Will Obama be able to achieve at least some foreign policy success in the Middle East, the Bermuda Triangle of White House diplomacy?

COMMENT

Obama's address was warmly received by the audience at Cairo University, which spanned the political spectrum from ordinary students to secular dissidents and fundamentalist Muslim Brothers. The president acknowledged that many of the Muslim world's grievances toward the West derived from the long period of colonialism, followed by cold war interventions. He thus avoided the common Western implication that Muslims are somehow essentially more fanatical or irritated than other human beings. He declined to let this explanation serve as a pass for violent extremism, however: whatever its roots, he insisted, it is unacceptable, "does not succeed" and must be fought.

His big applause lines came when he cited the Koran on truth-telling and social tolerance and when he spoke of human and women's rights. But he was not booed even when he defended Israel or pledged to pursue the Afghanistan war. The two concrete policy planks he put forward—a US military withdrawal from Iraq in accordance with the timetable adopted by the elected Iraqi Parliament and pursuit of a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine—were popular with his audience, though their enthusiasm was tempered with a healthy skepticism born of repeated disappointment. (Arabs probably have a better appreciation than do most Americans for the difficulty of getting anything serious done on the peace process, given the frightful conjuncture of a Likud government in Israel with a divided Palestinian Authority.)

Obama clearly won most Egyptians over. According to an instant poll conducted in Egypt by a government think tank, 37 percent believed everything the president said, while 41 percent believed some of it. Only 5 percent rejected the address as a litany of falsehoods.

The hardest group for Obama to win over are the region's fundamentalists. Devotees of political Islam—who form about 15 percent of the Muslim population, according to polls—were the most skeptical. Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood issued a communiqué rejecting the speech as a mere emotional appeal to Muslims that offered no real policy changes. The Brotherhood complained about Obama's support for Israel, his emphasis on what they monstrously called the "fable of the Holocaust" and his ignoring, they said, the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians. But only one in twenty Egyptians agreed with them. On the other side of the Red Sea, Israeli West Bank settlers com-

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Noted.

WIWA v. SHELL: On June 8 multinational oil giant **Royal Dutch Shell** agreed to pay $15.5 million to settle a lawsuit alleging that it conspired in human rights abuses in Nigeria. The suit was brought by the family of **Ken Saro-Wiwa**, an activist who was hanged by a military regime in 1995 after protesting Shell's environmental practices in the Niger Delta. Filed under the 1789 **Alien Tort Claims Act**, the lawsuit charged that Shell asked Nigeria's dictatorship to help silence Saro-Wiwa and paid and equipped soldiers who attacked his Ogoni community. The settlement recalls Saro-Wiwa's last statement. "Shell is here on trial," he wrote. "The crime of the Company's dirty wars against the Ogoni people will also be punished."

In 2004 the Supreme Court affirmed that the Alien Tort Claims Act authorizes foreign victims of serious, narrowly defined violations of international law to sue for compensation in US federal courts. These claims may be brought against non-state actors, including multinational corporations. So far no corporation has been found guilty, and Shell becomes only the third to settle a case filed under the statute and the first to disclose the terms of its settlement to the public.

The settlement does little to address the environmental devastation that continues to plague the Niger Delta, and it represents a drop in the bucket for Shell, which earned a record $31.4 billion in profits last year. But the Wiwa family is celebrating a global paradigm that has developed from their thirteen years of legal struggle. "Multinationals now know that a precedent has been set," said **Ken Saro-Wiwa Jr.**, the son of the slain activist. "Corporations will have to be much more careful." SASHA CHAVKIN

GOOD DEEDS: **Creigh Deeds** won Virginia's Democratic gubernatorial primary on June 9 as much because of who he *wasn't* as who he was. He wasn't **Terry McAuliffe**, the cocky consummate Washington insider who raised a zillion dollars for the Clintons. He wasn't **Brian Moran**, the longtime delegate from Alexandria with a brother in Congress, a team of high-profile political consultants (including **Joe Trippi**) and a Massachusetts accent he never could shed. In a race that was billed as insider versus outsider, Clinton versus Obama, there was a lot of old politics but not much new. Neither McAuliffe nor Moran could credibly claim to be reformist outsiders. Moran ran a tepid, traditional campaign bereft of excitement. McAuliffe brought his trademark (if not infectious) enthusiasm to the race but blew a big lead.

Deeds benefited from being Mr. Anonymous, a longtime state senator from rural Bath County known most prominently for owning a donkey named Harry S. Truman. He won the *Washington Post*'s last-minute endorsement and rode the momentum as the "anybody but Brian and Terry" candidate. He's a mixed bag—economically populist, conservative on guns, open to offshore drilling and coal mining, prochoice and pro–death penalty.

The victories of **Mark Warner** and **Tim Kaine** in 2001 and '05 helped put Virginia on the map at a time when Democrats struggled nationally. "Ol' Virginny is dead," Kaine proclaimed after Obama carried the state. But now the Republicans have finally fielded an attractive candidate in Attorney General **Bob McDonnell**, a law-and-order conservative who will make a play for the middle. McDonnell beat Deeds by 360 votes in the 2005 attorney general race. Pundits will proclaim the national significance of this race, but neither candidate is particularly compelling or charismatic. An Ali-Frazier rematch this is not. ARI BERMAN

FREE LEE AND LING: On June 8 two reporters for San Francisco–based Current TV, **Euna Lee** and **Laura Ling**, were convicted by North Korea's top court of an undefined "grave crime" against the state and sentenced to twelve years in a labor camp. The two were arrested on March 17 near the Chinese border, where they were reportedly investigating the trafficking of women. North Koreans who receive similar sentences of "reform through labor" often face starvation and torture. "These places have very high rates of deaths in detention," said North Korea watcher **David Hawk** in the *Chicago Tribune*. According to Hawk, many of the camps are affiliated with mines or textile factories, where long work shifts are often followed by self-criticism sessions and forced memorization of North Korean Communist doctrine.

But Hawk and other experts believe the pair will escape the worst of fates because of the international spotlight. After the verdict, the White House said that it is using "all possible channels" to secure Lee and Ling's release. Greatly complicating matters, however, is the dismal state of US–North Korean relations. North Korea is in the midst of a succession in leadership, and in May it detonated a nuclear bomb. Consequently, Lee and Ling have become prize chips in a high-stakes poker game. The key to securing their release seems to rest in de-linking the humanitarian issue of their detention from the broader questions raised by North Korea's nuclear ambitions. A petition calling for their immediate release is available at thepetitionsite.com/1/free-euna-and-laura. PETER ROTHBERG

DORIS SHAFFER REMEMBERED: A cherished member of the *Nation* family, **Doris Shaffer**, died peacefully on June 2 in her Manhattan home at the age of 80. The daughter of a leather goods worker and an elementary teacher, Doris was a founding member of the ACLU's Nassau chapter, obtained her MA in history from New York University and taught history at **Nassau Community College** for twenty-eight years. She married fellow student activist **Don Shaffer** in 1949. Together they helped form the **Great Neck Committee for Human Rights**, which opened up all-white housing to African-Americans in 1961. Doris was also the president of the college's faculty union from 1973 to '87, during which it gained a reputation for winning model contracts with public colleges, negotiated higher salaries, protected academic freedom, fought for merit-based hiring, defended controversial courses and included sexual orientation in the contracts' nondiscrimination clause. Doris and Don were active members of the *Nation*'s Circle of 100 partners. More recently, Doris played a pivotal role in the development of **The Nation Institute** and, among other things, provided the **Shaffer Fellowship**, held by **Katha Pollitt**. We mourn the loss of our old friend and extend condolences to her family.

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plained that Obama had suggested a moral equivalence between Israel and the Palestinians, calling that a form of Holocaust denial. In Iraq, firebrand cleric Muqtada al-Sadr dismissed Obama's pledge to depart Iraq as a baldfaced lie.

Even some fundamentalists, however, entered into the spirit of the speech, which was about bridging cultural differences by finding common ground. The Egyptian Islamic Group, a one-time terrorist group that is reinventing itself as a peaceful civil society organization, called on the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan to make a positive gesture to Obama in response to the speech. Even the radical Palestinian party Hamas admitted that it could "build on" Obama's speech.

It is startling to consider that last year at this time presidential contender John McCain was proclaiming "radical Islamic extremism" to be this country's transcendent challenge and a greater menace to the United States than had been the Soviet Union. (This was before the danger posed by crooked financiers threw other threats into the shade.) Some critics argued that Obama's specific policies differ little from those of Bush. But eschewing aggressive wars of choice, forbidding torture and closing Guantánamo are repudiations of Bush policies; and the new president's pledge not to impose democracy at the point of a gun also distinguishes him from his predecessor. Moreover, Obama, unlike Bush, is determined to do more than pay lip service to the ideals of withdrawing from Iraq and establishing a Palestinian state.

Still, the main difference in Obama's approach was his willingness to show respect to his audience. He insisted that the United States will be a partner, not a patron, for Iraq. That Obama's policies differ little from Bush's official stances makes it all the more clear that the Republicans' clamor against his speech arose from a petty refusal to treat Muslims even-handedly and with basic decency—something Republicans identify as "surrender" and an "apology."

Despite the carping from fundamentalists abroad and conservatives at home, there is little doubt that Obama succeeded in his primary goal of hitting the reset button for the relationship of the United States with the nearly fifty Muslim-majority states in the world. He thereby put the ill-conceived Bush/Cheney "war on terror" (or on an undefined "Islamofascism") behind us all.

Critics who complain that charisma outweighed substance in the address are strangely underestimating the ability of powerful oratory to galvanize an audience. Of course, the president has raised expectations and so must deliver on his pledges if he is to avoid frittering away the era of good feeling and neighborliness his speech inaugurated in the Muslim world. If US combat troops are actively patrolling Iraq in 2013 or the condition of Palestinians spirals down from here, he risks creating an angry backlash. If Obama really can get the United States out of Iraq, make tangible progress toward a Palestinian state and create a stable government in Kabul, those achievements would make him the most successful US president in the Middle East in history. Even achieving just one of these goals while avoiding subsequent violence would be a mark of greatness. What is clear is that a very substantial number of the world's 1.3 billion Muslims are rooting for him rather than against him.

JUAN COLE

Juan Cole is the Richard P. Mitchell Professor of History at the University of Michigan and the author, most recently, of Engaging the Muslim World *(Palgrave Macmillan).*

Calvin Trillin, Deadline Poet

Quarantine

Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans and his wife have been placed in quarantine after another passenger on their flight to China exhibited flu-like symptoms. —The Associated Press

Our laws on quarantine are strong,
But China's are much stronger.
Not strong enough, it's said at home.
They'd like him held much longer.

Europe Lurches Right

London

Trying to divine the political future from the results of European Parliament elections always involves an element of entrail-gazing. Across the continent, people take the opportunity to register protest votes; many don't vote at all. The turnout for the June elections (43 percent) was at a historic low. But even with those caveats, two things are obvious: the center-right has won at the expense of social democrats, even in France, Germany and Italy, where voters might have been expected to give ruling conservatives a kicking; and the collapse of the left vote has let in an unprecedented number of far-right and neo-fascist candidates, as well as a few more Greens.

COMMENT

The far right made gains in the Netherlands, where anti-Islam campaigner Geert Wilders's Freedom Party came in second, with 17 percent; in Italy, where the Northern League more than doubled its share of the vote; in Hungary, where the anti-Roma Jobbik party took three out of twenty-two seats; in Austria, where two extreme right parties polled 18 percent; in Slovakia, where strident nationalists won their first seats; and in Britain, which elected not one but two candidates from the British National Party (BNP)—a whites-only neo-Nazi group committed to "reversing the tide of non-white immigration."

All these groups prey on white working-class insecurity, fattened on anti-immigrant scaremongering. Mainstream politicians have helped lay the ground for them with slogans like

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Prime Minister Gordon Brown's "British jobs for British workers." The refrain from BNP voters interviewed by the media has been "I'm not racist, but migrants from Eastern Europe are putting us out of work." Yet one of their new members of the European Parliament (MEPs), BNP leader Nick Griffin, is a white supremacist and avowed Holocaust denier; the other, Andrew Brons, has in the past supported bombing synagogues and led marches chanting, "If they're black, send them back." Though they may now wear suits and ties instead of buzz cuts and bovver boots, both men have their roots in the old National Front, the violent racist group that terrorized Britons of color in the 1970s.

In northern Britain, in the cities of the Netherlands, in the industrial towns of Italy, in Hungary and Austria, the far right has rushed in to fill the vacuum left by social democrats. Some voters have changed sides, but the BNP's Griffin in fact polled lower than he did five years ago. The reason he is now an MEP is that the Labour vote spectacularly collapsed. Elsewhere, the traditional left vote migrated to the Greens, who have increased their share of seats in the European Parliament from forty-three to fifty. In France former '68er Daniel Cohn-Bendit's Green coalition, Europe Écologie, finished less than 1 percent behind the Socialists; Greece returned its first Green MEP.

What explains the meltdown of the left in a time of recession and rage against bankers and bonuses? No European left-wing party has articulated a convincing alternative to the bailouts, or a coherent vision for the future. In France and Germany, voters see little difference between what social democrats are offering and the policies of their soft-right governments. Both Nicolas Sarkozy and Angela Merkel are launching big public spending programs and supporting generous welfare payments to protect the unemployed. When it comes to managing a crisis, one welfare capitalist seems as good as another—and better the devil you know than the devil who is, like France's Socialists, in a state of disarray.

First prize for disarray, of course, goes to Britain's Labour Party, embroiled for weeks now in a scandal about MPs' expense claims and in attempts to unseat its leader, Gordon Brown. After disastrous local election results, the European vote is one more nail in Labour's already bristling coffin. Relegated to third place after the Tories and the UK Independence Party—a formerly fringe libertarian group whose sole policy plank is opposition to the European Union—Labour did worse than it has in any election since 1918. It lost Scotland to the Scottish Nationalists and Wales to the Tories; it lost acres of heartland that may never be recovered, leaving hard-working local activists who have given their lives to the cause abandoned and betrayed. In early June Brown seemed to be held in place by Scotch tape and Peter Mandelson, Tony Blair's old familiar. He now looks set to survive for a few months at least, but Labour may be finished, for a decade or more.

While the media focus on Westminster plots and counterplots, the real rot goes far deeper. Like an overdose of chemotherapy, the New Labour project appears to have killed the patient it was meant to cure. In the 1990s, faced with a political consensus moved to the right by Thatcherism and a decimated industrial base, Labour had no choice but to reform. It did so by embracing the culture of spin and imposing spartan discipline to keep MPs "on message" and silence the Labour left. This pernicious centralization starved the party's roots and left local activists cut off from decision-making. Under Tony Blair, the party's membership halved. Large numbers jumped ship over the hated Iraq War, pushed through a reluctant Parliament with lies and misinformation.

The dysfunctional marriage of Blair and Brown, which festered for years at the administration's heart, may paradoxically have contributed to its longevity. For those of us who couldn't bear to turn our backs on Labour altogether, Brown's brooding silence made it possible to project all sorts of hopes: perhaps he wasn't in favor of the war, perhaps he really was to Blair's left, perhaps his community roots would reassert themselves and put an end to the glibness and glitz in favor of old Labour values.

We were wrong, on all those counts. As prime minister, Brown has been a failure: indecisive, secretive, unable to come up with a political narrative. He has also turned out to be a brutal operator, issuing threats by proxy and leaking negative stories about his own ministers to the press. Some of those ministers have behaved even worse: Hazel Blears, former communities secretary, quit the cabinet on the eve of polling day, wearing a Cheshire cat grin and a badge that read Rocking the Boat—and pulling the rug from under scores of local councilors standing for reelection. The party is at its own throat as it has never been before, even in the wilderness years of the Thatcherite 1980s.

Barring some unprecedented event, a year from now Britain will have a Conservative government—which brings us back to the European elections. To please the anti-Europeans in his party, David Cameron has pledged to take the Tories out of the center-right alliance in the European Parliament and form a bloc of Eurosceptic groups. To that end he has been making common cause with far right parties mostly from Eastern Europe, like Poland's fundamentalist Catholic Law and Justice Party, which considers homosexuality a "pathology" and climate change a hoax, and the Czech Republic's Civic Democratic Party, whose founder, Vaclav Klaus, sees Brussels as the new Moscow. Though Cameron will have no truck with obvious neofascists like the BNP, the anti-immigrant Danish People's Party could be another ally.

The European Parliament remains for now in the hands of the center right, and the extremists' election may have no direct effect on European policy. But it will give racist groups legitimacy and funds and make it more acceptable for mainstream politicians to blame immigrants and minorities for their countries' ills. On June 6, D-Day's sixty-fifth anniversary, Brown and Barack Obama met on the beaches of Normandy with some of the last veterans of Europe's fight against fascism. As living memories of that struggle fade, the racism under the skin of this crowded continent is finding a public space in which to assert itself once more.

MARIA MARGARONIS

Maria Margaronis writes from The Nation*'s London bureau.*

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Ten Things.

Ten Things You Can Do to Stimulate a New Economy

At a time when the financial crisis has eroded any faith we might have had in big business and the capital markets, it is more important than ever to support companies that are having a positive impact on their communities, employees, consumers and the environment.

Andrew Kassoy, who founded B Corporations with his friends Bart Houlahan and Jay Coen Gilbert, has built a model for companies that do business to benefit society rather than just make profits (see bcorporation.net). The objective of B Corporations is to provide the market infrastructure to help such mission-based businesses succeed. The 190 firms that make up the B Corporations network earn their profits by helping to solve social and environmental problems.

Kassoy, a former private equity investor who managed a good chunk of Michael Dell's estate, offers a perspective developed from B Corporations that will help entrepreneurs, consumers, community members and voters learn how they can use the financial crisis as a one-time opportunity to build a new economy. Here are Kassoy's suggestions of things each of us can do to stimulate the economy in a way that will have a positive long-term impact on society. For additional information, go to TheNation.com.

1 Business owners can take their banking to a "good bank" or mission-based bank (go to cdbanks.org and cdfi.org). These institutions lend to serve Main Street, not Wall Street.

2 Owners and consumers alike should buy supplies from companies that create benefit for the community. For a starter list, go to bcorporation.net/community.

3 Assess the social and environmental impact of the company you run, work for or buy from. Here's a guide on to how to do it with resources to implement best practices: survey.bcorporation.net/register.php.

4 Make sure the company you own or work for institutes a purchasing policy that supports good companies. For example, it should purchase sustainable paper from a place like New Leaf Paper (newleafpaper.com) and "charitable" office products from Give Something Back (givesomethingback.com). And it could do business with a community bank like ShoreBank Corporation (shorebankcorp.com/bins/site/templates/splash.asp).

5 If you have a financial adviser, ask her how she measures the social return on your investments. Tell her you want to make money *and* make a difference. If you don't get a good answer, change to a socially responsible investment professional. For a listing, see socialinvest.org/directory.

6 Devote at least 1 percent of your personal assets to making responsible investments. Every year make a commitment to double the percentage of your assets that are invested in responsible financial instruments. Engage in mission-based investing. For more information, go to moreformission.org/page/2/resources.

7 Invest in e3bank (e3bank.com), the first bank whose business model is based on the triple bottom line of people, planet and profits. It is also the first bank that's democratizing private-impact investment opportunities by allowing individuals to own a piece of the bank—for as little as a $5,000 investment.

8 As a consumer, purchase products from good companies. Buy from local businesses that build stronger communities, or from socially responsible businesses that have a smaller carbon footprint, that sell products like organic or fair-trade foods—which are healthier and better for the environment—or that maintain a better work environment for their employees. Look for social enterprises that provide products and jobs to people and communities in need. Go to livingeconomies.org for some examples.

9 Put your savings into a local bank that will use your money to build stronger small businesses and healthier communities in your area, and that know their customers well enough not to make bad loans. Your deposits in these banks are federally insured up to $250,000. For more information, go to shorebankdirect.com.

10 Demand that any government stimulus money that goes to your state benefit the community. Be sure that any projects or initiatives using this money have prevailing-wage jobs. It's your money; make it work for you.

CONCEIVED BY WALTER MOSLEY with research by Rae Gomes

"Ten Things" is a monthly feature. Readers who wish to propose ideas for it should e-mail NationTenThings@gmail.com.

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Alexander Cockburn

The 'Rogue Nation' Contest

Was there ever a failed state as barbaric as North Korea? Not only is this "rogue nation" endangering the security of the planet in its efforts to elbow its way into the exclusive club of nuclear powers but it has now dispatched two Asian-American journalists for twelve-year prison terms in one of its labor camps, notorious for their brutality and appalling conditions. The women, Laura Ling and Euna Lee, work for a TV channel owned by former Vice President Al Gore. According to their friends, the two crossed North Korea's border with China, intent on investigating the alleged trafficking of women.

Leaving aside the obvious fact that the fates and harsh sentences faced by Ling and Lee are tied up with the evolution of relations between North Korea and the new Obama government, let's try to achieve some sense of balance on the charge of barbarism. Let's suppose a country has endured a half-century of continuous attack by assailants based in the United States, suffering nearly 3,500 dead and 2,000 wounded. Let's further suppose that this country faces sabotage of its budding tourism industry, including the bombing of hotels and murder of tourists. Now let us suppose that this country sends investigators to infiltrate the assailants and hands the results of the probe to the FBI. The investigators I'm talking about are the Cuban Five—courageous men who went to southern Florida and penetrated the Miami-based gangs, specifically Alpha 66, the F4 Commandos, the Cuban American National Foundation and Brothers to the Rescue.

In 1998, after Fidel Castro had dispatched Gabriel García Márquez as an emissary to the Clinton White House, the United States sent an FBI team to Havana to discuss the gangs' attacks. Cuba handed over sixty-four files on thirty-one terrorist acts and plans against Cuba in the 1990s.

Cuba expected the FBI to start arresting the terrorists. Instead, on September 12, 1998, the FBI arrested the very investigators who had come to Miami to probe the activities of the Miami terrorists. Gerardo Hernández received a double life sentence, and Antonio Guerrero and Ramón Labañino received life sentences. The remaining two, Fernando González and René González, received nineteen and fifteen years, respectively.

It's true that the Cuban Five weren't sent to a labor camp akin to those in the North Korean gulag. Where they were sent, however, was described by Hernández earlier this year at CounterPunch, in an interview with filmmaker Saul Landau, who is making a documentary about the men:

GH: "They took us to the prison, the Center of Federal Detention in Miami, and put us in 'the hole.'"

SL: "For how long?"

GH: "Seventeen months.… You're in the cell twenty-three hours a day and [get] one hour a day of recreation, where they take you to another place. In Miami it was…a bit bigger and with this grid, through which you could see a little piece of the sky. You could tell if it was day or night.… There we were twenty-three, sometimes twenty-four hours a day inside those four small walls, with nothing to do. It's very difficult, from a humane point of view. And many people couldn't take it. You could see them start to lose their minds, start screaming."

Having set North Korea's barbarity in a larger perspective, let us turn to the dangers its testing program and intermittent detonations pose to world security. On May 25 North Korea conducted its second underground nuclear test, two and a half years after the first. Obama promptly denounced it as "a grave threat to the peace and stability of the world." He added that North Korea's actions had "flown in the face of United Nations resolutions" and were inviting deeper international isolation.

Almost four months earlier, Obama had nothing to say when, on February 3 or 4, two nuclear-powered submarines—one British, one French, each carrying nuclear missiles—collided in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. Unlike the North Koreans, who immediately reported their test to the world, neither Britain nor France said anything. Nor did the United States. On February 16 the British, Murdoch-owned *Sun* was the first paper to disclose the crash. Then, and only then, an anonymous British official said the sub *Vanguard*'s "deterrent capability has remained unaffected and there has been no compromise to nuclear safety." The question of what either sub was supposed to be deterring was not addressed.

France's Defense Ministry said in a brief statement on February 6 that the sub *Le Triomphant* struck "a submerged object (probably a container)" during a return from a patrol, damaging its front sonar dome. The ministry did not confirm the date of the collision and didn't mention the British sub. The *Vanguard* limped back to home port, considerably dented, according to observers. *Le Triomphant* was escorted by a frigate back to its base on France's west coast. There is no reason to believe a single word of either the British or French government's account of the crash.

Sarkozy's first speech on "defense" after he became president came with the dedication of *Le Triomphant*'s sister sub, *Le Terrible*, and a threat to nuke Iran. Blair closed out his decade as prime minister by announcing a new series of nuclear subs to carry Trident nukes. He singled out North Korea for specific mention. "No single nation should pick and choose which nations hold nuclear weapons," Obama declared piously in Cairo—even as he told Iran that "when it comes to nuclear weapons, we have reached a decisive point," and as his secretary of state, Hillary Clinton, went on ABC to talk murkily about "consequences and costs" if Iran develops nuclear weapons and then stumbled through a hypothesis about a US attack, even "a first strike."

And they call North Korea a rogue nation? ■

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Katha Pollitt

Dr. George Tiller, 1941–2009

Trust women. That was the motto of Dr. George Tiller, abortion provider and hero. Dr. Tiller trusted women: to know their own life circumstances, to know themselves. Trusting women has an old-fashioned ring to it, doesn't it, like "sisterhood." How quaint, the notion that a woman, faced with a crisis pregnancy, can reach into herself and make the decision that's right for her—at any rate, a better decision than someone else would make for her, someone who doesn't know her, has never been in her predicament and doesn't have to live with the consequences.

Someone like, oh, a man. In the immediate aftermath of Dr. Tiller's murder it was astonishing how many men were called upon to weigh in on abortion on national television. CNN featured William Schneider, Sanjay Gupta and Bill Press. On Fox, Bill O'Reilly defended his use of "baby killer" and "death mill" to describe Dr. Tiller and his clinic. On MSNBC, Keith Olbermann—who the last time I checked in spent a whole segment making fun of Miss Anti–Gay Marriage California's breast implants with waspish misogynist Michael Musto—had only men: *Slate*'s Will Saletan, who thinks we can "end" abortion by stigmatizing women with unwanted pregnancies, because right now everyone is just too kind, and Andrew Sullivan, who knows as much about women's reproductive lives as I know about soliciting bareback sex on the Internet. Sullivan confessed:

> I do think that—I mean, I'm personally opposed to what he does. I actually don't believe in late-term abortions. But I have to say—on my blog today, a lot of women wrote in and told me their own stories of this. And I was kind of shaken by the fact that most—most women—almost all women that go to these places, are in desperate straits. The children are very, very deformed or ill or will not survive birth or the mother's health is directly threatened. These are very grave and difficult circumstances.

So Sullivan, who has been an outspoken antichoicer for two decades, is only *now* finding out why women terminate pregnancies? Shouldn't that have been part of the basic research? And even after hearing the awful stories, he still, apparently, thinks Dr. Tiller was wrong to help them: women ought to carry anencephalic fetuses to term, give birth to Tay-Sachs babies who will live a few brief agonized years, postpone their own cancer treatment or heart surgery to give birth even if delay means they die, have their stepfather's baby in middle school. But at least he feels bad about it now.

In the more than three decades since *Roe v. Wade*, "the fetus" gradually became the star of the abortion drama, and the voices of women who had abortions, *aka* "the woman," leached out of the public discussion. How many embryos can dance on the head of a pin—now *that's* interesting! Off-the-cuff judgments about how late is too late and what kinds of health problems count as serious—everyone's a doctor! Even women who have had abortions sometimes play the blame game—my abortion was necessary, but you're just a slut. The murder of Dr. Tiller has gotten more women telling their stories, and that is a crucial, good thing. Not so that panels of pundits can approve or disapprove but so that society can hear, firsthand, what girls and women go through. After all, since *Roe*, 45 million American women have terminated at least one pregnancy. That's more women than the dwindling flock who accept Catholic doctrine on sexual matters, and more women, I'll bet, than even know who Rick Warren is.

President Obama speaks frequently about finding common ground in the quest to reduce abortions, as if we all agree that the problem is the number, and not the need. Prochoicers, who have rejoiced at his support for contraception, realistic sex ed and accurate reproductive science, must be scratching their heads at his nomination of Alexia Kelley, founder of Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good, to direct the Health and Human Services Department's Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. CACG has many fine positions—it opposes war and poverty and the persecution of immigrants—but it supports church doctrine banning abortion and contraception. It's a travesty that its head will now control more than $20 million a year in funding to religious groups for family-planning services: you might as well put an astrologer in charge of funding for NASA. Maybe reproductive rights organizations think they have bigger fish to fry, but I am disturbed by the quiet around this appointment, made before Dr. Tiller was even cold in his grave. Only Catholics for Choice seems worked up about it. As we go to press, Feminist Majority, Planned Parenthood and NOW have said not a word, although NOW's Kim Gandy told me she was "aghast" and would speak out soon. A NARAL spokesperson e-mailed me this tepid statement: "We would not have picked her for this position. What's important to note is that she will be working for a pro-choice Secretary of Health and Human Services and a pro-choice president. We fully expect this administration to continue to promote pro-choice policies in the same way they have since day one."

Meanwhile, word comes that Dr. Tiller's clinic will not reopen. Terrorism works…

* * *

You can honor the life of Dr. Tiller and make sure that low-income women receive safe abortion care by making a donation to the George Tiller Memorial Abortion Fund at the National Network of Abortion Funds. Contribute online at nnaf.org/tiller.html or mail a check to George Tiller Memorial Abortion Fund, c/o National Network of Abortion Funds, 42 Seaverns Avenue, Boston, MA 02130. ■

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As the cost of college hits the stratosphere, students are organizing to bring it down to earth.

"Open the doors to all," declared City College founder Townsend Harris in 1847. "Let the children of the rich and poor take their seats together and know of no distinction save that of industry, good conduct and intellect." And indeed, all students attended City College free until 1976. Like the neo-Gothic campus—stunning, as if from the pages of a fairy tale, yet physically decaying from underfunding and neglect—Harris's vision has taken a beating over the years. Yet it is still alive among City College student activists—and perhaps its time has come again.

At 2 o'clock on a rainy late-April afternoon, City College students were scheduled to walk out of class to protest proposed tuition hikes. Two slender young men stood tentatively in front of the student union, wondering if anyone else was going to show up. They'd seen a poster about the walkout. One of them, Mohammed Ramin, a sophomore, had been laid off from his job at Circuit City a month earlier. He was worried he might lose some of his financial aid. Then, with a tuition hike, he'd be unable to afford to stay in school. His friend Stanley George, also on financial aid, said—in a sentiment being echoed by students all over the country—that even without a tuition increase, "people right now can't afford to go to school."

More students slowly gathered in front of the student union, and soon hundreds were chanting, "Hey, hey, ho, ho! Tuition hikes have got to go!" Ramin and George giggled shyly. But after a few minutes, they were chanting too.

The City College students weren't alone this spring in taking action against recession-inspired tuition hikes. Students also walked out of class at Hunter and Brooklyn colleges and students rallied at Hostos Community College. And the action wasn't limited to New York City. About a thousand students at the University of Vermont participated in a similar walkout, as did students throughout the University of California system. In May some schools quieted down for exams, but students at Central Washington University walked out of class. At the University of Illinois, Chicago, students, community members and university workers rallied against tuition hikes and layoffs. The message of these protests is that state budgets should not

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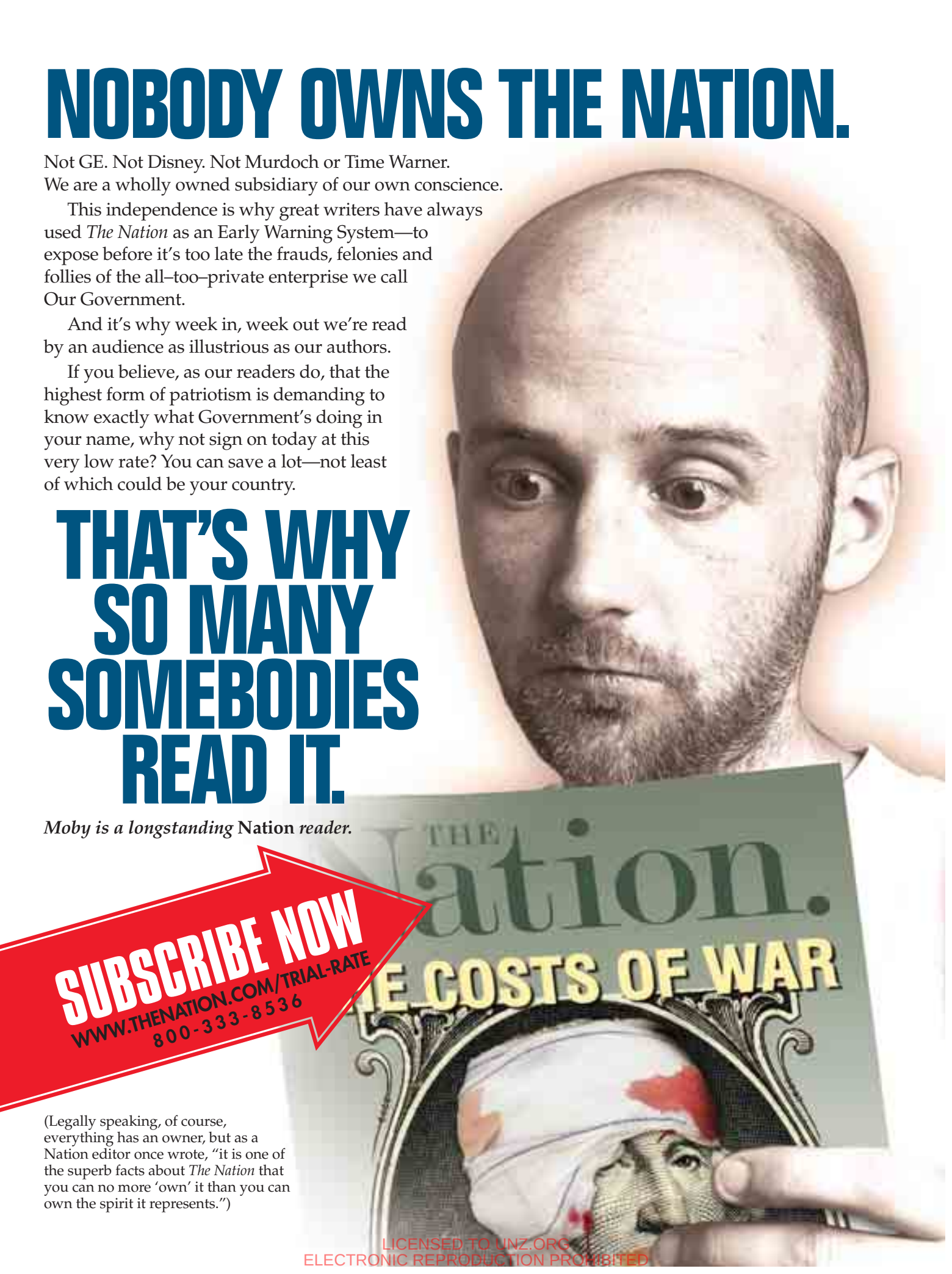

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(Legally speaking, of course, everything has an owner, but as a Nation editor once wrote, "it is one of the superb facts about *The Nation* that you can no more 'own' it than you can own the spirit it represents.")

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be balanced at the expense of students. Says Gionni Carr, the governor-appointed student representative to the Tennessee Board of Regents, "They're treating us like we're ATMs, not like we're the future of this nation."

Even before this recession, the high cost of college in America was a crisis. The federal Pell Grant, the largest source of financial aid for low-income students, covered 76 percent of tuition at public four-year colleges in 1990–91. Today it covers less than half, according to the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. Student indebtedness has thus reached an all-time high: two-thirds of students graduate in debt—about $22,000 per student on average, according to the Project on Student Debt. A 2007 survey of college freshmen found that almost 10 percent were not sure they'd have the funds to graduate. The Washington, DC–based United States Students Association projects that in the next decade up to 3.2 million qualified students will pass up the opportunity to go to college because of the expense, which is, of course, not limited to tuition. Carr, now a part-time student at the University of Memphis, recalls, "Some semesters I couldn't afford to buy all my books."

College affordability is not just a student issue. It is about what kind of society we are going to have: one of well-educated citizens who are able to grapple with questions about the meaning of life and the existence of God, find cures for cancer, ease climate change and critique the powerful, or one in which ignorance and mediocrity are blandly, even cheerfully accepted. In *Default*, a movie-in-progress about student debt, a young woman says, "We're just going to get stupider until there's a change. We're just going to get dumber."

College affordability is about the kind of society we want: one of well-educated citizens, or one in which ignorance and mediocrity prevail.

Particularly in urban schools, the protests are inspired not only by the affordability issues but by outrage that the tuition isn't well spent. At City College, students must contend with broken desks. Plumbing problems are neglected, with predictably foul consequences. At the University of the District of Columbia (UDC), where students managed this year to delay a planned tuition hike through protests, Elissa Selmore, a pre-med senior, points out that in the administration building "everything works nice," but elsewhere on campus "steps are crumbling, pipes are broken. In my biology lab, there's a big hole in the wall. We have handicapped students, and the elevators and escalators never work." Selmore, a 24-year-old single mother who must pay for daycare on top of her other expenses, says, "You can't ask us to hand over our money and not ask where it's going and what are the results."

While there could, in most places, be much closer cooperation between faculty unions and student groups, they do seem to embrace each other's concerns. "There's a myth that students only care about cost and faculty only care about pay, job security," says Ferd Wulkan of the Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts (PHENOM), a coalition of academic unions (who fund the network) and student groups. "But it's not true. Faculty care about tuition because they care about their students." Students, he says, know that faculty issues affect their education. City University of New York's faculty and staff union, the Professional Staff Congress, has been one of the most vocal champions of affordable tuition. In Tennessee, students have been protesting budget-cutting practices and faculty furloughs (forced time off for professors). At UDC, says Selmore, students are worried about a similar proposal. "Most of my biology professors are [grad students] at the doctorate level," she says. "Are they the ones who will be downsized?"

Many activists direct their protests toward college administrations, as students often do instinctively: during the walkout at City College, protesters marched to the administration building to demand a meeting with the president. But in New Jersey, students from all over the state rallied at the Capitol against cuts to higher education, in alliance with administrators. This makes sense: their interests are the same.

Private colleges and universities, too, have seen tuition rise as endowments shrink. In May students at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania, held a hunger strike to protest large tuition hikes and faculty layoffs; Vassar students used the same dramatic tactic to protest the elimination of a summer jobs program for students in need. But most private campuses have been quiet. At Sarah Lawrence College in bucolic Bronxville, just outside New York City, many students' parents work in the finance industry and have lost jobs; although the tuition has increased only slightly, some formerly wealthy students are struggling to stay in school. But there have been no protests. In part, the recession inclines people to resignation and a sense that collective sacrifice is inevitable. "I think most of us feel bad for Sarah Lawrence," says student Maggie Murphy. "We want it to survive." Students at Sarah Lawrence—which, at $53,000 a year, is the most expensive school in the country—say their costs are so high already that the increases seem small by comparison, and that many who can't afford it stay away altogether, an analysis echoed by students at other private colleges.

Even at public schools, protesters are frustrated that more students are not joining the cause. Part of the problem may be that organizing tends to focus on the tuition hikes—which don't immediately affect everyone—rather than broader issues of access. Activists at City College and UDC say many of their friends are indifferent to the tuition increase because they receive so much financial aid that they are insulated from those costs. "It is kind of disappointing that there are not more minority students here," says Fayola Powell, a quiet, bookish-looking City College junior (who is black), as she gestures toward the lounge of the Guillermo Morales/Assata Shakur Community and Student Center, where an organizing meeting is taking place. "If people get financial aid, they come

Liza Featherstone, a Nation *contributing writer, is co-author of* Students Against Sweatshops: The Making of a Movement *(Verso).*

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here free. So they are just not worried about it." In reality, however, at many schools the prevalence of financial aid artificially inflates tuition, undermining the aid sources in the long run. And in the short run, the financial aid programs also create the illusion that middle-class and low-income students have divergent interests.

Another obstacle activists face is America's widespread shame over money. Although a college degree is increasingly needed in order to land a job better than one at, say, Home Depot, people regard the high tuition and consequent debt as an individual problem: "We knew what we were getting into, coming here," says one Sarah Lawrence student. Even at City College, a young woman points out at the organizing meeting that students are defensive about their economic status: "People feel the need to say, 'This isn't me; it doesn't affect me.'"

Though tuition increases usually result from shortfalls in state budgets, the problem of college affordability demands national solutions. After all, it's easy to see why, to administrators, a tuition hike often seems like the only reasonable way to fill a hole in the budget; only the federal government can make the large-scale investment of resources needed to avert such measures. The United States Students Association lobbied throughout the spring for more financial aid, and it was successful: on April 29 Congress passed a budget that increased aid, along with modest reforms of the student loan system, ending some of the costly subsidies to private student loan companies. Student advocates will be lobbying throughout the summer for President Obama's proposal to increase Pell Grants substantially so students won't graduate with so much burdensome debt.

Why not demand that higher education be free? Why not take this country's meritocratic promise at face value and try to make it real?

Not surprisingly, European political imaginations, nourished by decades of social democracy, run a little wilder. In Germany, where higher education used to be free and tuition has existed only for a few years, Bavarian students responded to increases by taking to the streets and demanding the abolition of tuition. In Zagreb, students occupied a building for five weeks in response to tuition hikes, demanding "free education from primary school to doctorate."

Even here, neoliberalism hasn't completely foreclosed discussion of socialized higher education. Not many politicians want to go there yet—although John Edwards did, during the last Democratic primary. But if a movement demanded it, who knows what might happen? Why not demand that higher education be free? Why not take the meritocratic promise of this country at face value and try to make it real? A few groups are agitating for small reforms in the context of this far-longer-term goal. City College activists constantly remind their fellow students that the school used to be free. PHENOM, the Massachusetts coalition, "takes on short-term issues, pennies more for financial aid"—"win a little, lose a little," as staff organizer Wulkan puts it. But PHENOM also published a paper advocating that community colleges be free and has been holding public events to discuss this demand. The group has even started talking to legislators about it. "They are receptive," says Wulkan. "Though, of course they say, Not this year."

There are excellent practical reasons to make college free, beginning with the Keynesian. "From the standpoint of stimulating the economy, it's a no-brainer," says Adolph Reed Jr., University of Pennsylvania political science professor and organizer of the Free Higher Ed! campaign, originated by the Debs-Jones-Douglass Institute, a think tank associated with the Labor Party. "It puts [government] money into play and creates jobs by expanding the number of people who will go to college." More important, Reed says, "education is a social right, like healthcare." (This is a premise Americans accept when it comes to younger kids: people had to fight for free high school in the early twentieth century, but we now take it for granted, and we would find the suggestion that only rich children deserve an education morally repellent.) To Reed, it's uncivilized that we don't have free higher education already. "To oppose it is to embrace a conviction that not everyone should be able to pursue an education, that it should be rationed by cost." In any case, he argues, the "cost is so laughably low": about $80 billion to make all public institutions free, much less than the recent bank bailouts.

This sort of vision—combined with demands that may sound more "reasonable" and be easier to achieve quickly—attracts young people to a movement. Asked what drew him to organize for the City College walkout, Jason King recalls coming to a meeting in the Morales/Shakur center—controversially named for two City College radicals accused of involvement in political violence in the 1970s. "I saw mad revolutionary type of shit," King says, pointing to the banners celebrating rebels around the globe. "I'm in a very Renaissance stage of life," he muses, "trying to figure out how the world works. Learning about this tuition increase, I realize I've been very naïve."

For those not inclined to revolutionary flourish or philosophical exploration—although, of course, these in themselves are arguments for a college education—there's always the democratic idealism of a Townsend Harris. Or the equally old-school American Dream. As student rep Gionni Carr puts it: "We are just trying to better ourselves." Whatever the rhetoric, it's about time we educated everyone.

Obama's proposed reforms are a long way from this ideal, but they reflect a widespread hunger for affordable education. While no movement has yet emerged to force the president to be a real visionary, it's not too bold to hope that his election signals a more thoughtful turn in American politics. Obama seems to embody, especially in contrast with his predecessor, the virtues of a great education. It is, then, a promising moment to make a case for higher learning and for universal opportunity. Says Wulkan, "There's been a slight change in everyone's understanding of the world." That's not a bad place to start. ■

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Radioactive Revival in New Mexico

Navajos say 'No!' as the return of uranium mining threatens to despoil their lands and health.

by SHELLEY SMITHSON

Mitchell Capitan points to a flock of sheep grazing in the shadow of a sandstone mesa. The sheep belong to Capitan's family, along with a few head of cattle and twelve quarter horses standing in a corral near his mother-in-law's house in Crownpoint, New Mexico.

"All of this area," Capitan says, gesturing to the valley of sage and shrub brush below, "there's a lot of uranium underneath there. That's what they're after."

Capitan and his Navajo neighbors are battling a license granted by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to Hydro Resources Inc. (HRI)—a subsidiary of a Texas company, Uranium Resources—one of several firms that have laid claim to the minerals beneath thousands of acres on and around the lands of the Navajo Nation and three American Indian pueblos in northwestern New Mexico. A group called the Eastern Navajo Diné Against Uranium Mining is suing the NRC to block mining in Crownpoint and another Navajo community. A panel of federal judges in Denver heard the case in May 2008 but has yet to issue a ruling.

A resurgence of interest in building nuclear power plants, touted as a nonpolluting alternative to carbon-fueled plants, has sparked a uranium rush. Since 2007 the NRC has received seventeen license applications for twenty-six new reactors, causing a flurry of applications for uranium mining permits across the Four Corners region, where New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and Colorado meet. In February Energy Secretary Steven Chu announced that the Energy Department would expedite the approval process for $18.5 billion in federal loan guarantees for utilities that are building nuclear plants. The guarantees, along with other Bush-era incentives, are meant to spur construction of new plants.

The anticipated rise in demand for uranium has led the industry back to the very places it deserted three decades ago when it abandoned hundreds of mines, seven polluted uranium mills, billions of gallons of contaminated groundwater and mountains of radioactive waste. Congress is only now beginning to press agencies to clean up the mess, an undertaking that could cost taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars.

Plenty of people in this economically distressed corner of New Mexico are thrilled about the 8,000 new jobs and $1 billion in economic benefits the uranium industry promises. They point to claims made by industry lobbyists in a concerted PR campaign that new technology will make mining safer and that cast doubt on the connection between uranium mining and the illnesses that plague people who worked in mines and mills or lived near them.

Shelley Smithson, a freelance writer in Urbana, Illionis, teaches journalism at the University of Illinois. *Research support for this article was provided by the Puffin Foundation Investigative Fund at The Nation Institute.*

JANNA BROWER

Many others, especially American Indians like Capitan, remain unconvinced. They are afraid the companies will leave behind another trail of environmental destruction, illness and death like that of thirty years ago.

Sitting in his wood-paneled office in Window Rock, Arizona, Navajo Nation president Joe Shirley Jr., a tall, thin man with silver hair and a fierce opposition to uranium mining, declares, "I don't believe there is any safe technology that can be used to mine uranium. Many of my people died because of mining of uranium ore here on Navajo land. Back at that time, the US government did not apprise my people of the dangers that are inherent with the mining of uranium ore. And as a result, a lot of people came down with cancer." Shirley has watched several family members suffer from uranium-related illnesses. "It is devastating. It has wrecked the lives of our families," he says.

He rejects the idea that mining is needed because it will bring jobs to the Navajo Nation, where the unemployment rate is around 50 percent. "How much is a life worth?" he says.

"If you can show me the cure for the cancer that is caused by the uranium ore, I might have second thoughts about it," he says. Until then, the tribe will continue to fight the state and federal agencies that grant permits to uranium companies despite the opposition of American Indian communities.

Starting in 1942, much of the uranium used for atomic bombs being built in Los Alamos was mined in northwestern New Mexico. Between 1950 and 1979, the region yielded more yellowcake than any other place in the United States. Hundreds of uranium mines and seven mills—many of them on or near

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Indian land—stocked the government's cold war atomic arsenal and, eventually, the nation's nuclear power plants.

Though the region has always been poor, locals remember the uranium era as a prosperous time. People ate lunch at the Uranium Cafe in Grants, listened to country music on KMIN (pronounced K-mine) and built houses with scrap materials from the mines. On weekends Indian uranium workers and their families drove from the reservations to the border towns of Grants, Gallup and Farmington to shop.

But in 1979, everything changed. Public outcry over the near-meltdown at Three Mile Island plus construction cost overruns dealt the uranium industry a deathblow in a few short years. For thirty years no new nuclear plants were ordered in the United States. The nation's 104 nuclear reactors bought cheap surplus uranium from government stockpiles and later from dismantled Soviet-era nuclear warheads.

The first uranium boom left a toxic legacy to the people of the area. Uranium workers, inadequately protected from the dangers of mining and milling, developed a range of maladies. Although the government knew of the health risks of radioactive dust—European studies from the 1920s and '30s had linked uranium mining with lung cancer—officials did not require mine companies to ventilate shafts or to limit worker exposure to radon, the radioactive gas released during mining. Duncan Holaday, an industrial engineer at the Public Health Service, discovered that radon levels in US mines in the 1940s were as high as those found in European mines in the 1920s. "He tried to convince the mine operators and the Atomic Energy Commission that they were going to have a big epidemic here if they didn't start ventilating the mines. But nobody paid much attention to him," says Dr. Victor Archer, now in his 80s and living in Salt Lake City. Archer worked with Holaday for nearly two decades on an epidemiological study for PHS on the relationship between radon and lung cancer. Though he knew the miners were at risk of developing lung cancer, Archer says he was not allowed to warn the 2,500 men in the study about their unsafe work environments. "It was understood if we upset the miners…then the mine operators would not let us examine the miners," he says.

The researchers repeatedly warned mine operators and state and federal mining officials of the dangers of working in unventilated mines. "We'd tell them about the European experience, and they'd say, 'Those foreigners are different from our miners,'" Archer recalls. "Mostly they would object because to ventilate would cost them money."

Just as the researchers warned, uranium workers developed lung cancers, as well as a long list of other ailments. In 1990, after fifteen years of litigation and lobbying by the families of deceased miners, Congress passed the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, which provides payments of $100,000 to miners, millers and ore haulers who contracted specific lung diseases, as well as some millers and ore haulers diagnosed with certain renal diseases. Congress recognized the government's failure to protect those who worked in "mines that were providing uranium for the primary use and benefit of the nuclear weapons program of the United States." But the act covers just

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a fraction of those afflicted only before 1971, when the government stopped buying uranium for its weapons program and passed standards to limit worker radiation exposure. Post-1971 workers who suffer from the same illnesses say they too should be compensated. They claim that the government's radiation limits were insufficient and that regulators did not force companies to follow rules intended to protect workers' health.

The new uranium rush has resurrected antagonisms among Indians, Anglos and Hispanics and sparked a bitter war over the future of uranium mining in New Mexico. Many Indians say they were, and still are, treated as second-class citizens in stores, restaurants and businesses in border towns, where their sales taxes support city coffers. Non-Indians complain that Indians living on reservations do not pay property taxes yet are able to vote in school bond referendums, which often benefit reservation communities. There's anger, too, about the prevalence of drunk driving on the roads between the reservations, where alcohol is illegal, and the border towns, where bars are plentiful. But few issues evoke more emotion than the prospect of uranium mining.

Many American Indians fear that pollution from uranium mines and mills could contaminate mountain springs, rivers and aquifers.

On a Saturday afternoon in June 2008, racial tensions simmered when 700 people packed into the high school gymnasium in Grants. The Route 66 town is home to 8,800 people, two prisons, a handful of 1950s-era motels and twice as many fast food restaurants. On one side of the gym sat a crowd of mostly American Indian residents, who had come from nearby communities to voice their opposition to proposed uranium mining near Mount Taylor. The 11,000-foot snowcapped peak rises above the stark badlands between Grants and Albuquerque and is sacred to five tribes in the Southwest—the Navajos, Acomas, Lagunas, Zunis and Hopis. Last year the Navajo Nation joined twenty other Southwestern tribes in opposing mining on Mount Taylor. Indians claim that protection of the mountain is crucial to their religions and cultures.

Many Indians fear that pollution from uranium mines and mills could contaminate the mountain springs, rivers and aquifers that supply water for crop irrigation, homes and businesses on their land. The Navajo Nation Council banned new uranium mining on Navajo land in 2005.

"If you contaminate our groundwater, where do we go for water after that?" Shirley demands.

In the bleachers on the other side of the gym sat mostly Anglo and Hispanic residents from Grants and neighboring towns. They were there to speak in support of mining and against a state plan to set aside the top of Mount Taylor as a culturally protected landmark.

In June state officials voted to make the cultural listing of the mountain permanent, a decision that could hinder uranium mining on private and public land within and adjacent to the cultural-property boundaries. That possibility led to a fierce campaign by the uranium industry that pitted Anglo and Hispanic landowners against the state and the tribes. Commenting on the move to designate Mount Taylor a traditional cultural property, industry lobbyist Marita Noon called it "a sneak attack, sadly perpetrated largely by Native Americans against white men."

James Martinez of Albuquerque says state officials are placing Indian culture above all others. Martinez's great-great-grandfather was born in a cave at the base of Mount Taylor on land given to Spanish settlers 300 years ago by the king of Spain. Twenty thousand acres were granted to several families, including the Martinez clan. But over the years, three-quarters of the Juan Tafoya Land Grant, as it was called, was lost to back taxes and sloppy paperwork or unscrupulously taken by Anglo lawyers and ranchers.

"Thirty-five years ago, my father made [the land grant] into a corporation," Martinez explains. "He brought a lot of people back who lost their rights there."

The land grant now totals 4,500 acres, including the village of Marquez—population zero. The Martinez family lived in Marquez until after World War II, when they moved to Albuquerque. Now all that remains of the village are a few empty houses, a vacant church, a closed post office and an abandoned school. Just beyond the village, beneath the icy mountain streams and ponderosa pines, is a uranium ore body estimated at 15 million pounds.

When Martinez was a teenager, a uranium company sank a shaft and built a mill near Marquez, but before any ore was pulled out of the ground the price of uranium collapsed. So too did the family's dream of becoming wealthy. Then, four years ago, after two decades of uranium prices that averaged around $10 a pound, the price of uranium started to climb, reaching an all-time high in 2007 of $138 a pound. (It has since fallen with the price of other energy commodities to $49 a pound.) The 500 shareholders of the Juan Tafoya Land Grant voted to lease the land to Neutron Energy, a private uranium company based in Phoenix. The company, which plans to operate a shaft mine and a mill in the area, promises that technology and safer operating procedures will make mining and milling environmentally benign.

Martinez's son Amadeo is already benefiting. Neutron gave him a scholarship to attend the University of New Mexico, where he is studying geology in hopes of working for the mine company. He plans to move back to the village of his ancestors someday. "I know the Natives. We've been accused [by them] up front of only looking for the fast dollar," says James Martinez's wife, Patricia. "We see it as a way to help the economy, to help our future, the next generation."

From Linda Evers's front yard she can see the snow-covered cap of Mount Taylor to the east. To the north her view is blocked by a ten-foot red fence that separates her property from the boundaries of the Homestake Mill Superfund site. Today all that remains of the closed uranium mill eight miles northwest of Grants are a few metal

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buildings and two earthen impoundments. Covering 240 acres, the Homestake impoundments, holding piles of tailings, are filled with 20 million tons of radioactive sludge generated by thirty years of milling uranium.

Evers, a former miner, miller and ore hauler, says she became a member of the Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment because she wanted the community to remember that uranium has sickened Anglos, Hispanics and Indians. Evers, who is Anglo, believes her degenerative bone disease and persistent skin rashes are linked to uranium exposure. "My daughter was born with no hips at all," says Evers, whose son was also born with birth defects.

The multicultural alliance is composed of Indian, Anglo and Hispanic members of five grassroots organizations opposed to new mining. The group has given tours of contaminated areas to state officials, worked with lawmakers to craft legislation and testified before the state legislature about widespread groundwater pollution at Homestake Mill. Despite a three-decade remediation effort that has been overseen by the NRC and the Environmental Protection Agency, contamination from Homestake's tailings has migrated to five regional aquifers. A 2008 report by the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry declares the site a public health hazard and states, "even upon completion of the remediation, the levels of uranium and selenium will be above drinking water standards."

This year, state environmental officials ordered people in Evers's neighborhood to stop drinking well water. In addition to contamination from mill tailings, state officials are investigating whether radioactive pollution from abandoned uranium mines north of Homestake might be contributing to toxic underground plumes.

Fifty miles west of Grants, in the Navajo community of Church Rock, soil testing in 2007 revealed radiation levels so high that EPA crews wearing hazardous materials suits brought in backhoes to remove dirt from the yards of five families. The homes are located between two abandoned mines and a former mill that was the site of the largest radioactive spill in US history.

The residential dirt removal cost the government $1 million and was part of an EPA plan to clean up one of the two mines. Despite opposition from the community and the Navajo Nation, the NRC issued a permit allowing HRI of Dallas to begin new mining at the other abandoned mine.

Larry King, who lives nearby, testified in 2007 before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, which is pressing the EPA to clean up more than 500 abandoned mines on the Navajo Nation. King said, "The NRC ruled that the radiation from the [old mine] site doesn't have to be included in [the permit's] public dose calculations, that the wastes there are now part of 'background,' as if the Great Spirits had placed them there from the beginning of time.… I guess [NRC's] mandate to protect the public health and safety just doesn't apply to we Navajos."

King's neighbor Edith Hood, who was diagnosed with lymphoma in 2006, also implored Congress to halt the NRC's approval of new mines in Navajo communities. "My father has pulmonary fibrosis. My mother was diagnosed with stomach cancer. My grandmother and grandfather died of lung cancer. Many of my family members and neighbors are sick, but we don't know what from," Hood said. "How can they open new mines when we haven't even addressed the health impacts and environmental damage of the old ones?"

According to the EPA, long-term exposure to uranium and its radioactive byproducts has been linked to chronic lung and renal diseases and cancers. Uranium exposure may also cause tumors in the tissues where new blood cells are formed and in the lymphatic system. Long-term exposure to high levels of radium—a byproduct of uranium mining—may cause anemia, cataracts, fractured teeth, head and nasal passage tumors and bone cancer.

A 2000 study reported that two Navajo children exposed to uranium while in the womb suffered deadly central nervous system disorders. Their mother had unknowingly led the family's sheep to water at uranium-contaminated springs and had drunk the water herself. Hood said she fears that traditional Navajo families, who raise and butcher sheep, may be eating meat that is poisoned with uranium and other heavy metals.

According to the EPA, long-term exposure to uranium and its radioactive byproducts has been linked to chronic diseases and cancers.

A federally funded project at the University of New Mexico is trying to determine if there is a connection between drinking uranium-tainted water and kidney disease. Many Navajos in northwestern New Mexico do not have running water, so they haul water in fifty-gallon barrels from public wells. Nearly one-quarter of these unregulated water sources likely contains unsafe levels of uranium, according to the US Indian Health Service.

It's 10:02 on a crisp fall morning in Grants. Radio KMIN is on the air, playing "goo-ooo-ood country music."

"Thanks for tuning in to KMIN," says the effervescent announcer and station president, Derek Underhill. "It's time for our public-service program on energy. Our experts are brought to you by CARE." The mining-industry-backed CARE, the Citizens Alliance for Responsible Energy, is sponsoring an eight-week "educational series" on the community's AM radio station, featuring one-hour interviews with uranium executives and mining-friendly lawyers, economists, academics and scientists.

The guest this morning is Steven Brown, a health physicist who has worked in the uranium industry for forty years. Brown is discussing a 1999 report by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. "[The report] states, and I quote, 'No human cancer of any type has ever been seen as a result of exposure to natural or depleted uranium.'" Brown does not provide the next sentence in the report, which states, "Uranium can

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decay into other radionuclides, which can cause cancer if you are exposed to enough of them for a long enough period."

Downplaying uranium-related illnesses and environmental pollution on the radio is only one move in the industry's public-relations playbook. In public hearings and industry-sponsored "educational meetings," the executive director of CARE, Marita Noon, claims environmentalists are using Indians as pawns to block mining and to keep the state's residents poor. Noon, who was a Christian motivational speaker before becoming a self-proclaimed "advocate for energy," says God put uranium in New Mexico so that Americans can wean themselves from Middle Eastern oil and Russian uranium.

Industry lobbyists also make their case to regulators and legislators. In March a New Mexico House committee tabled a bill that would have empowered state regulators to force companies to clean up their messes from decades ago. "The industry came out hard against it," says Nadine Padilla, a lobbyist for several grassroots groups, including the Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment. Another failed bill would have created a permanent fund to clean up abandoned mines that are contributing to groundwater pollution.

Mining 'is going to be a big risk because our main aquifer is the sole drinking water for this community,' says Mitchell Capitan.

At an NRC hearing in Albuquerque last fall, uranium lobbyist Adella Duran demonstrated the cozy relationship between the industry and some lawmakers. Duran stood at the podium and told an NRC panel that she had been asked by representative to the New Mexico Legislature John Heaton to speak on his behalf.

"He wasn't able to be here tonight," she explained. "He knew that I was going to be here in a different capacity, and so he has asked me on his behalf, for the record, to read a letter that he has written to [NRC] Chairman Klein."

After reading the statement by Heaton, who is chair of the State House Radioactive and Hazardous Materials Committee, she moved to the other side of the podium and spoke on behalf of her clients, the uranium industry, urging the NRC to expedite its permit process for new mines.

The industry is peddling influence at the local level, too. Both Homestake and HRI have hired the Albuquerque public relations firm D.W. Turner to bolster their images as good corporate citizens. Homestake established a "Little Miners" program to fund classroom projects at the Grants elementary school; both firms support numerous nonprofit organizations, from literacy programs to domestic violence shelters to crisis pregnancy centers.

"They're going around handing out checks to people, to businesses, nongovernmental organizations, a lot of social programs that have been starved," says Chris Shuey, a community organizer with the Southwest Research and Information Center, an Albuquerque-based advocacy group. Shuey, who is often referred to by CARE's executive director as an "environmental zealot," says he has watched the debate devolve into an atmosphere of racial divisiveness and hate. "There's been demonizing and just meanness and ruthlessness against people who have been upstanding citizens," he says. "They say there are rabid environmentalists. There is nobody as rabid as these pro-uranium people."

Mitchell Capitan stands at the end of a washboard road and points to a large water tank perched atop a mesa in his hometown of Crownpoint. There are no major rivers in this part of the state, and since most people do not have a well, every day residents from the surrounding area come to the community well and haul water to their homes. An estimated 15,000 residents draw water from the Crownpoint well.

Mining "is going to be a big risk because our main aquifer is the sole drinking water for this community," says Capitan. "We have good clean water."

Instead of sinking a shaft or digging a pit, HRI plans to extract uranium by injecting bicarbonate solution into the sandstone aquifer—just one-quarter mile from the municipal well. The injection will release uranium from the rocks, where it has been encased for eons.

The company claims the process, called in situ recovery (ISR), is as safe as pumping baking soda underground. But the solution also mobilizes heavy metals, including arsenic, selenium and molybdenum, all of which are pumped to the surface then back into the ground after the uranium is extracted. Opponents worry that water contaminated with uranium and heavy metals will travel through underground channels to the village well 1,500 feet away, just as radioactive plumes from mines and mills have sullied aquifers to the south in the Grants and Church Rock areas.

HRI's parent company, Uranium Resources, has used the technology for thirty years at mines in South Texas. Richard Abitz, a geochemist who advises opponents of ISR mining in Texas, Colorado and on the Sioux Indian Reservation in Nebraska, says no ISR operation has ever restored the underground water at a mine site to its original condition. State and federal regulators routinely amend allowable levels of uranium and heavy metals after restoration efforts fall short, he said. In Texas, Goliad and Kleberg counties are trying to force uranium companies, including Uranium Resources, to clean up aquifer contamination from previous ISR operations.

Meanwhile, the NRC is considering a plan that would expedite the environmental review process for ISR operations nationwide, a move opposed by the New Mexico Environment Department. At a hearing on the issue last year, Capitan stood up and implored Navajos to unite against uranium mining. "Let's be banded together in one and protect our land and our water, because water is sacred," he said.

"How about if there was no water?" Capitan continued. "We can't live. We might have a million dollars right here, and I'm thirsty—which one am I going to take? I'm going to drink that water." ■

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The Little Agency That Could

Bolstered by Congressional support, the FTC flexes its muscles.

by MICHAEL PERTSCHUK

After nearly 100 years, the stars may finally be aligned so that the Federal Trade Commission can live up to its original promise. The FTC, a small agency created in 1914 during the Progressive Era, was endowed with a potent authority for promoting competition and consumer protection that it has never fully used. This includes investigative authority over virtually all businesses, backed by subpoena power and the capacity to demand reports of data that corporations would rather withhold from public view.

The FTC and its antitrust big brother, the Justice Department, have for generations competed, not partnered. Now the stage is set for a more productive collaboration, with the FTC taking more far-reaching and innovative approaches to corporate giantism. Recently President Obama's chief antitrust enforcer at the Justice Department, Christine Varney, announced a return to aggressive antitrust enforcement. What was not generally noted by the press was that Varney had previously served as a Democratic FTC commissioner and has a deep commitment to the agency's broad mandate. After decades of Justice Department antitrust chiefs looking down their noses at the FTC's efforts to expand its antimonopoly reach, the agency now has an ally and partner at Justice.

Under the Bush administration, the FTC performed useful, if modest, tasks and emerged with its competent and committed investigative and prosecutorial staff intact and uncorrupted. Under its chair, William Kovacic, a veteran antitrust enforcer, the FTC went after anticompetitive mergers, recession-spawned debt-collection abuses and Internet fraud, and stubbornly refused to cooperate with the Bush Justice Department's efforts to eviscerate antitrust enforcement.

The FTC has even more progressive leadership now. Its new chair, Democrat Jon Leibowitz, appointed by Obama from among the sitting commissioners (thus, not needing Senate confirmation), has been a vigorous proponent of strong agency action in critical areas of consumer protection, such as children's advertising that promotes obesity, and more vigorous antitrust action. This FTC has brought action to stop brand-name pharmaceutical companies from paying generics to stay off the market as part of their patent settlements. These agreements cost consumers billions of dollars. The three other sitting commissioners—two Republicans and one independent—believe in the agency's mission and are prepared to take progressive, even radical, action. For example, one of the Republicans, Thomas Rosch, a lively relic from the days when Republicans believed in competition and rigorous antitrust enforcement, recently exhorted the FTC to use its broad antitrust mandate to break up those "too big to fail" corporations that have bedeviled the

JANNA BROWER

Obama administration's economic recovery strategies. "Antitrust laxity during an economic recession can result in a deepening of economic contraction," Rosch declared. The progressive economic adage "Bigness can be badness," heresy under the Bush administration, is back.

The FTC is the pre-eminent enforcer in consumer protection, but it lacked the support or enough resources from Congress to expand its reach to the plague of corporate assaults on consumers exacerbated by the recession. This, too, has changed. For the first time in decades, the Senate and House authorizing and oversight committees and the judiciary committees are pressing the agency to act more aggressively on the consumer-protection and competition fronts and are prepared, as needed, to strengthen its enforcement powers.

This changed Congressional dynamic surfaced in a recent FTC oversight hearing presided over by the new chair of the Senate Commerce Committee, Jay Rockefeller. Commissioner Pamela Jones Harbour was testifying on the FTC's enforcement measures against predatory debt collection practices. Rockefeller peppered her with admonitions: with a couple of million people facing these problems, why was he supposed to be impressed by thirteen recent FTC cases? The effort was appreciated but it just didn't count anymore. "People will just keep slipping underwater. It's like murder, murder without blood." What the agency needed was a cop mentality—send people to jail. Hold them up to ridicule. Word gets out in the underworld, he said. Shortly after that, FTC chair Leibowitz responded indirectly by naming David Vladeck to direct the agency's Bureau of Consumer Protection. Vladeck served as lead litigator, and later

Michael Pertschuck is a former chair of the Federal Trade Commission appointed by President Jimmy Carter.

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director, of Ralph Nader's Public Citizen litigation group for nearly thirty years, continuing his advocacy as a law professor at Georgetown University Law School.

But Congress needs to take action to unleash the FTC's full potential. First, it remains a small agency with broad and complex responsibilities and cumbersome procedural burdens, especially in rule-making. Here, the FTC's champions in Congress can make certain that Congress supplies more resources and streamlines the FTC's authority. The agency also has a chronic problem of setting priorities: wherever it turns, there are corporate malefactors, large and small, deserving of prosecution. Last year then-chair Kovacic prepared a broad review of the FTC's effectiveness on the occasion of its approaching 100th anniversary. In his report he called for a larger staff and mission for the FTC's independent Policy Planning Office to set priorities for the agency—especially apt to its mission of helping to restore a healthy and competitive economy. But the effort needs more than planners; it needs many more prosecutorial troops on the ground.

The second problem facing the FTC is the hangover from eight years of reactionary Bush judicial appointments hostile to FTC cases. (These cases invoked innovative legal theories that aimed for such goals as denying mergers or breaking up huge conglomerates and cited not only traditional anticompetitive theories but broader theories of harm to the economy and the public welfare.) This impediment, too, could be significantly ameliorated by clear legislative authority.

Perhaps the FTC could have its most valuable impact not from developing new cases or rules—which could take years to wind through hostile courts—but by using its existing powers to launch broad investigations that would provide the evidentiary foundation for new legislation strengthening the FTC's competition and consumer-protection authority. In earlier times, such investigations were requested, even mandated, by Congress, through the FTC's authorizing committees: the Senate and House Commerce committees, now chaired, respectively, by Rockefeller and the leading consumer advocate in Congress, Henry Waxman. A simple Senate or House resolution initiated by either committee could launch a serious investigation of the need to break up existing corporate giants whose size constitutes not just an anticompetitive threat but a broader threat to society. Even a joint request from Waxman and Rockefeller, followed by the necessary appropriations, could set such investigations in motion. For example, the FTC is prohibited from investigating the insurance industry, our next unfolding financing scam, by a lobbyist-engineered legislative prohibition. But that ban could be overridden by a simple request from the House and Senate Commerce committees.

President Obama has peopled his antitrust and consumer-protection agencies with exactly the right advocates. A little encouragement from his administration to the already willing Congressional leaders could initiate fundamental change we can believe in. ■

Letters

(continued from page 2)

one—a livable wage. The second and third are pretty good, too—having to do with democratizing the workplace and creating the social corporation—but they seem way up in the clouds. Here are *my* numbers 2 and 3: (2) Enact single-payer universal healthcare. It shouldn't be so hard to do what every other industrial nation does—provide healthcare for all its citizens. (3) This is a little harder. We need an education system that allows every high school graduate with a B average a fully paid college education up to and including a PhD. If we can do that, everything is possible, including Greider's daydreams.
Bill Crowley

Greider Replies

Washington, D.C.
These letters and many others confirm the central point of my new book: people need to step up and reassert their power as citizens. They see the realities more clearly (and honestly) than do the governing elites in both parties and the business/financial sector. The country needs a new politics in which citizens take on our public and private governors.

In my own behalf, I urge Craig Randleman and Erica Etelson to read *Come Home, America* in full. I do indeed speak to their complaints—the scandal of poverty amid plenty and the ecological crisis. For Americans the imperative to act on both dimensions is self-evident. Now we shall see if the Washington machinery is ready to do so.
William Greider

Return With Us Now to 1599…

Tarzana, Calif.
Anyone who read James Longenbach's review of Jonathan Bate's book on Shakespeare ["This Small Extravagance," May 4] would find fascinating a book he did not mention: James Shapiro's *A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare: 1599*. Shapiro comes as close as likely possible to achieving Longenbach's and Bate's aim: a biography of the mind—how and why Shakespeare wrote what perennially interests us. Shapiro chooses just one year, 1599, when the Bard was 35, as a window into his life and mind. He weaves an intricate tapestry of the world Shakespeare inhabited as he and his company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, established the Globe Theatre—and could have been ruined.

Shapiro roots this daunting business venture, and the four epic plays Shakespeare wrote that year, firmly in the tangled thicket of Elizabethan London near the end of the queen's reign. Shapiro's exhaustive research into the details of daily life, Shakespeare's contemporaries, his milieu and the social, political and economic forces at play re-create the zeitgeist and intuit much of Shakespeare's psyche and animus. Suddenly, fleetingly, he and we breathe the same air.
Lauren H. Mason

Longenbach Replies

Rochester, N.Y.
James Shapiro's *A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare* is worth reading, as is A.D. Nuttall's *Shakespeare the Thinker*. But if you really want to know what a biography of the mind might feel like, read Kenneth Gross's *Shylock Is Shakespeare*. It's clear, provocative, beautifully proportioned, and it dares to speak Shakespeare's mind.
James Longenbach

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Books & the Arts.

An Empire of Vice

by JOSHUA JELLY-SCHAPIRO

Three days before Christmas in 1946, Havana's Hotel Nacional was closed for a private meeting. Armed guards blocked entry to its lovely grounds atop a seaside bluff in the plush El Vedado district. Inside the stately cream-colored Art Deco hotel, a group of distinguished foreign visitors tucked into a feast of local delicacies. There were crab and queen conch enchiladas from the southern archipelago; swordfish and oysters from the nearby village of Cojímar; roast breast of flamingo and tortoise stew; grilled manatee, washed down with añejo rum. It is unknown whether the attendees—whose number included about twenty of North America's most notorious gangsters—ended their meal with a cake like the one served at their feast's fictional rendering in *The Godfather Part II*. But as in the film, the purpose of the gathering was clear: to divvy up shares in the empire of vice they were busy establishing in Havana.

During the next decade, the mafia built a seaside gambling resort, which soon rivaled in profits and glamour its sister project in dusty Las Vegas. Under the canny direction of Meyer Lansky, the Jewish don who'd risen from the streets of New York's Lower East Side, members of the Havana Mob became fabulously wealthy. So too did Cuba's US-backed dictator, Fulgencio Batista, whose stake in the mob's affairs exceeded the sacks of cash delivered weekly to the presidential palace. With Lansky and fellow mobsters like Santo Trafficante employed as "tourism experts" in his government, Batista eliminated taxes on the tourism industry, guaranteed public financing for hotel construction and—as T.J. English shows in *Havana Nocturne*, an exacting and lively account of the era—even granted responsibility for Cuba's infrastructure development to a new mob-controlled bank, BANDES. In December 1957 the opening of the Riviera, a $14 million mafia show palace just down the seawall from the Nacional, was celebrated by a special episode of *The Steve Allen Show* on US television and a gala in Havana featuring Ginger Rogers. Three months later, the twenty-five-story Havana Hilton—mortgage holder: BANDES—became Cuba's biggest hotel yet.

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"Patient Waiters Are Not Losers," a cartoon from the January 13, 1897, issue of *Puck*

The party ended on New Year's 1959, when Batista fled the island as Fidel Castro's *barbudos* advanced on its capital. Castro and his bearded rebels established their headquarters in the Havana Hilton and loosed a truckload of pigs on the sleek lobby of the Riviera. Castro announced the "socialist nature" of his revolution. Nikita Khrushchev sent Soviet missiles. President John F. Kennedy—who, during a visit to Havana the previous year as a senator, had spent an afternoon with three mob-supplied prostitutes under the gaze, from behind a two-way hotel-room mirror, of Santo Trafficante—instituted the embargo that defines US-Cuba relations to this day.

"I couldn't get that little island off of my mind," Lansky remarked after his first visit to Cuba in the 1920s. The gangster was no less covetous of Cuba, and proved no less fixated on controlling it, than a series of US presidents reaching back to the founders. "I have ever looked on Cuba," wrote Thomas Jefferson to President James Monroe when the United States gained control of the Florida peninsula in 1821, "as the most interesting addition which could ever be made to our system of States." Monroe's secretary of state, John Quincy Adams, was more blunt. "The

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annexation of Cuba to our federal republic," he wrote, "will be indispensable to the continuance and integrity of the Union itself." After the United States took possession of Texas and California by war in 1848, many in Washington advocated annexing Cuba by force as well. The impulse was quashed for a time. Nevertheless, with Spain's empire sunk in a long decline, the United States' eventual possession of Cuba was viewed as inevitable for most of the nineteenth century. In a political cartoon from 1897, one of a trove of such images Louis A. Pérez Jr. uses to illustrate his brilliant book *Cuba in the American Imagination*, Uncle Sam stands beneath a fruit tree with a basket of plums, each bearing the name of a foreign territory already attained—Louisiana, Florida, Texas. From an upper branch hangs a "Cuba" plum, upon which Sam gazes keenly, his look distilling the common view: if America refrained from picking Cuba with a forceful hand, the ripe prize would eventually fall to its basket simply by dint of geography and time.

When the warship USS *Maine* mysteriously exploded while docked at Spanish Havana in February 1898, the United States had a pretext for shaking the tree of its remaining fruit. A few months later, Cuban rebels and invading US forces expelled Spain from the island, and Cuba (along with Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines) was annexed to the United States. "We went to war for civilization and humanity," President William McKinley eulogized, "to relieve our oppressed neighbors in Cuba." Humanity's gains were hazy, but what the United States certainly gained from the war was an empire. Puerto Rico and the Philippines became de facto American colonies; and with the passage of the Platt Amendment in 1901, Washington arrogated to itself the right to intervene in Cuba's affairs whenever it wished—providing also for the seizure of Cuban territory at Guantánamo Bay to establish a US naval base purposed "to enable the United States to maintain the independence of Cuba" (and conveniently positioned to protect what would soon be a key sea lane to the Panama Canal).

Gaining control of Cuba fulfilled a long-sought strategic aim. But equally important for the United States was how the invasion of Cuba came to shape its foreign policy and self-image at large. The Spanish-American War—the Union's first large-scale military campaign since Reconstruction—bolstered American unity and inaugurated America's self-conception as a "universal nation" endowed with the moral mission of projecting its power abroad. Before 1898, as Pérez stresses, quoting the historian Norman Graebner, "the foreign policies of the United States were rendered solvent by ample power to cover limited, largely hemispheric, goals." Afterward, those policies became global, their stated aims—universal democracy and freedom for all humanity—abstract in nature and unobtainable in practice. As Pérez writes, the template for US foreign wars, up to the "war on terror," with its crusading aim to "rid the world of evil," was cast in America's war for Cuba.

Books discussed in this article:

Havana Nocturne
How the Mob Owned Cuba…and Then Lost It to the Revolution.
By T.J. English.
Harper. 396 pp. Paper $15.99.

Cuba in the American Imagination
Metaphor and the Imperial Ethos.
By Louis A. Pérez Jr.
North Carolina. 333 pp. $34.95.

Pichón
Race and Revolution in Castro's Cuba, a Memoir.
By Carlos Moore.
Lawrence Hill. 395 pp. $26.95.

Bacardi and the Long Fight for Cuba
The Biography of a Cause.
By Tom Gjelten.
Viking. 413 pp. $27.95.

That Infernal Little Cuban Republic
The United States and the Cuban Revolution.
By Lars Schoultz.
North Carolina. 745 pp. $35.

The Cuba Wars
Fidel Castro, the United States, and the Next Revolution.
By Daniel P. Erikson.
Bloomsbury. 352 pp. $28.

The argument that the Spanish-American War was a watershed in the United States' fashioning of its national identity isn't new. The value of Pérez's study—the latest in a series of perceptive books on US-Cuba relations by this prolific historian—is to illustrate how an avid US self-interest was transformed into selfless moral enactment. While *Cuba in the American Imagination* is hampered by confusing chronology, Pérez shows clearly how in the late nineteenth century politicians in the United States and their allies in the press employed language—and a series of figurative metaphors specifically—to nurture in Americans' minds a conception of Cuba as object and stage for fulfilling the United States' imperial destiny. Early on, there was the image of Cuba as ripening fruit that would "naturally" and inevitably one day be Uncle Sam's. Later came references to Cuba as "our Armenia," implying that the United States, by defending Cuba's rebels against Madrid's repression, could prove its humanitarian mettle where Europe's nations had failed to prevent the recent Armenian genocide at their door. And finally, as invasion approached, there were invocations of Cuba as a virtuous lady whose protection against Spain's depredations was a test of American manhood.

This last figure was yanked out of the political funny pages and foisted upon Evangelina Cossío Cisneros, the 18-year-old daughter of a Cuban rebel leader purportedly arrested for sedition in August 1897 who was also, according to William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal*, "the most beautiful girl in the island." Evangelina's picture became a tabloid staple, her ordeal at the hands of her captors the topic of regular lurid updates. The melodrama ended only when Hearst's paper announced, two months before the explosion of the USS *Maine*, that it had arranged for Evangelina's escape to the United States. To celebrate her arrival as a "Cuban Joan of Arc," Hearst organized a mass rally to which more than 75,000 New Yorkers arrived chanting "*Viva Cuba Libre!*"

In the aftermath of the Spanish-American War, the US agenda changed from justifying invasion to legitimating a continued military and economic presence. Accordingly, the representation of Cuba as a comely woman in distress—usually depicted, like Evangelina, as white in complexion (and thus a fair reflection of American virtue)—changed too. The mixed-race isle was now depicted in tabloid cartoons as a pitiable black child holding the hand of a beneficent Uncle Sam on the path to progress. Previously, US opponents of annexing Cuba had often based their arguments in racism. "The white inhabitants form too small a proportion of the whole number," as one diplomat put it in 1825; moreover, explained a Congressman in 1855, "the Spanish-Creole race…are utterly ignorant of the machinery of free institutions." Now the same logic justified a strong imperial hand. The Cubans, the commanding US general in the 1898 war declared, were "no more capable of self-government than the savages of Africa."

If once Cuba had figured as a virtuous lady in need of saving by an imperial enterprise cloaked in a *mission civilitrice*, it soon came to

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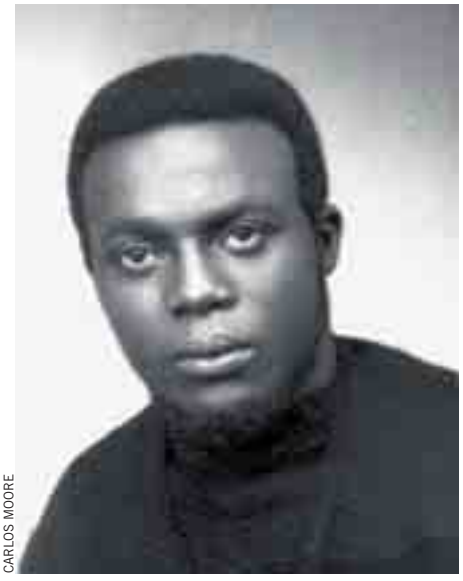
be seen as a different sort of woman, one whose mission was servicing others. "We gave Cuba her liberty," declared a US Army veteran on holiday in Havana in 1925, "and now we are going to enjoy it." The island's bustling main seaport had never been a stranger to prostitution. But as the tourist trade grew, so did Havana's reputation as "the brothel of the New World." The island "was like a woman in love," touted a typical travel writer's account, and "eager to give pleasure, she will be anything you want her to be." Simultaneously overseas and right next door, Cuba became the place where Americans—especially American men—went to escape the stolid mores of wife and home. With the passage of Prohibition in 1919, legal booze fortified Cuba's libertine lure. *When It's Cocktail Time in Cuba* was the title of a popular US tourist guide, and Havana bartenders concocted new rum-based elixirs like the Cuba Libre and mojito to coax more cash from Northern visitors. A short cruise from Florida—or, after Pan-American Airways launched its first international passenger route with Miami-Havana flights in 1928, an even shorter plane ride—Cuba was, by the 1930s, receiving more US visitors than even Canada.

By the time the US mob launched their Havana plot in earnest in 1946, tourism was already well established as a key portion of Cuba's economy. Mob designs for "the Monte Carlo of the Caribbean" evoked European playgrounds, with hotels named the Riviera, Deauville and Capri. But by the 1950s, "Havana" had acquired its own cachet for American consumers as both brand and idea. On television Desi Arnaz was the all-purpose Latin Lover, and advertisements hawked Havana perfume, Havana soft drinks, Havana lingerie. "Waving palms, a cool island breeze," went the slogan for El Paso brand Cuban Black Bean Dip. "Visit a forbidden paradise of silky black beans, sweet red pepper and an undercurrent of rich gold rum, resulting in a Cuban sensation that may taste mild, but is definitely hot, hot, hot!"

The cold war ended Havana's viability as marketing hook for consumers to the north. That it also made Cuba legally forbidden to American travelers, though, doubtless contributes to a still-thriving trade in Cuba-related books in the United States—volumes that (no matter their particular topic or politics) often find it impossible not to trade in shopworn clichés about pulsing rhythms and caramel skin and crashing waves on the Malecón. Even in a book like T.J. English's authoritative and otherwise sharply written *Havana Nocturne*, everything from Batista's facial features to the city's jazz scene is described as "exotic." Never mind that the cultures of Cuba and the United States have always been more deeply intertwined than partisans of either nation have sometimes cared to admit. The jazz bands that thrilled American tourists in 1950s Havana borrowed from the inventions of musicians in New York and Chicago; and no less a touchstone of Americana than rock 'n' roll, as the music historian Ned Sublette has convincingly shown, owed as much in its genesis to Cuban rhythms ringing out of Havana as it did to blues riffs busting out of



CARLOS MOORE

Carlos Moore in Paris, 1964

Memphis or New Orleans. Indeed, for two centuries up until 1960, the cultures of New Orleans and Havana were joined and nurtured by the streams of migrants and goods flowing between them.

What the "exotic" label also tends to conceal about Cuba is that to its own people as well as outsiders, the island has long been as much an idea as a country. At least since José Martí, the great poet laureate of Cuban independence, began composing odes to the island's "half-breed" soul in the late 1800s, there has existed in Cuba an obsession with reflecting upon and debating the national character. This tradition is perhaps most memorably manifested in the seminal anthropologist Fernando Ortiz's argument, in *Cuban Counterpoint* (1940), that all of Cuban identity and culture—from the rumba to the *mulata* to the cigar—can be understood as outgrowths of an economy based in producing tobacco and sugar for export. The discussion has taken many forms, but perhaps the dominant current in Cuba's politics and intellectual culture has always been the struggle over *cubanía*, or Cubanness. Fidel's revolution, before it was Marxist-Leninist or Castroist or anything else, has always been framed and experienced in Cuba as a nationalist struggle. Accordingly, it was not solely on the grounds of Marxian virtue but also *cubanía* that Fidel battled cocaine and prostitution as "un-Cuban" in the 1960s (never mind the Havana Mob's avoidance of the drug trade, or that sex-for-pay held a prominent place in Cuban society long before its exploitation by *yanquis*) and contended, during the 1970s, that Cuba's military involvement in Angola and Mozambique was driven by Cuba's core identity as an "Afro-Latin" nation.

Fidel's custodianship of *cubanía* has deep roots in a much longer history of Cuban men of privilege (and usually light skin) defining the nation's identity. Batista was a mulatto cane-cutter's son; Fidel and his brother Raúl were the children of wealthy Spanish landowners—putative members, that is, of a class of Cubans who thought the déclassé rule of an uneducated army colonel a national shame. Not every member of Cuba's elite who came to support Castro against Batista in the 1950s was driven by prejudice; Fidel has always been a strong anti-racist, in his way. But the *machista* worlds of elite Cuban politics and culture have always been paternalistic, whether in José Martí's wishful 1891 declaration that in Cuba "there are no races," or the longstanding tradition—from Nicolás Guillén's iconic 1930 poem "Mulata" to innumerable paintings of the copper-skinned Virgen de la Caridad—of holding up the sexy *mulata* as embodiment of *cubanía*, while affording to actual brown-skinned Cuban women little place in that nation beyond its brothels and kitchens.

After racial discrimination was officially banned in 1960 by his revolution, Fidel blithely declared that racism was defeated in Cuba. As in 1891, the actual situation was more complex. The masses of Afro-Cubans who'd lived in illiterate destitution since slavery—and seen 6,000 of their forebears massacred in a horrific 1912 race war—had the most to gain from socialist projects in housing, healthcare and education. That Cuba's 4 million blacks still provide a key base of Communist Party support is a measure of how much their lives have improved under Fidel. But as Carlos Moore writes in a poignant new memoir, *Pichón*, Castro's blind spots with regard to race have at times also been pernicious. *Pichón* takes its title from a Cuban slur for Jamaican and Haitian laborers who survived the Depression by scrounging for slaughterhouse scraps in the manner of ugly black buzzards, or *pichónes*. The book begins with Moore recounting a rural Cuban

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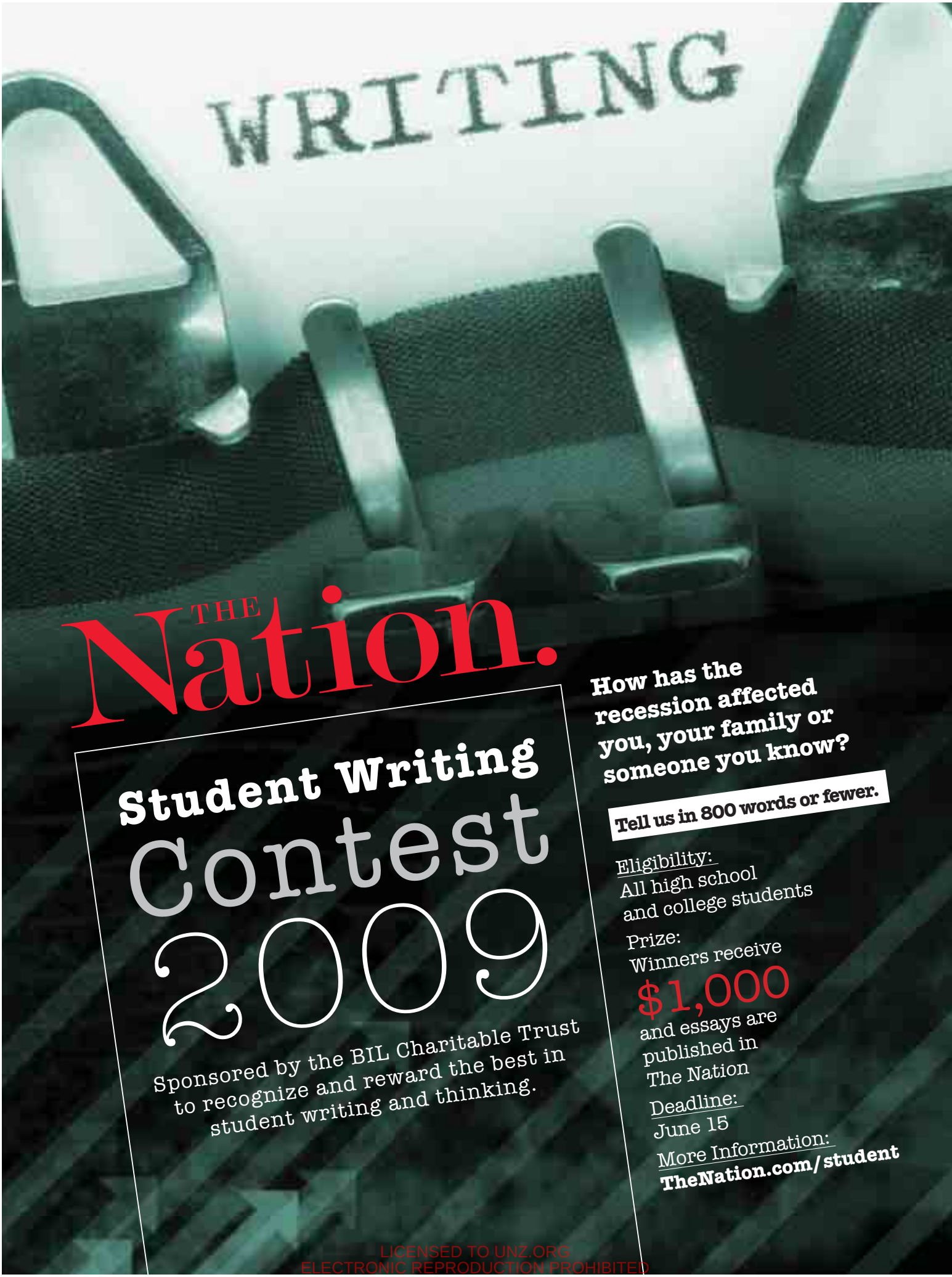

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childhood of being tormented by the fists and epithets of white schoolmates. Then comes the story of his personal epic: leaving for New York City at 16 in the late 1950s and falling into the black radical demimonde of Maya Angelou and Malcolm X, then returning to Cuba as an ardent Fidel admirer in the early 1960s, only to be imprisoned and exiled by Fidel's revolution for daring to protest the race prejudice of certain of its ministers.

Moore renders this tragic tale with frank clarity. He met his mentor Angelou in a Harlem bookshop shortly after his arrival to the cosmopolis in 1958; scarcely two years later, he directed an occupation of the UN General Assembly to protest the US-sponsored killing of the Congolese freedom fighter Patrice Lumumba. It was during Castro's own 1960 visit to the UN—during which Fidel stayed at the Hotel Theresa in Harlem to convey solidarity with those oppressed by the US empire at home—that Moore decided it was his revolutionary duty to join the cause.

Returning to Havana in June 1961, Moore sought to put his skills as an English speaker to work at the Foreign Ministry. He became convinced that the bureaucrat denying his requests for a job was doing so on account of his dark skin, and he took the audacious step of traveling to a provincial army barracks to demand a meeting with the only Afro-Cuban member of Fidel's inner circle, the guerrilla hero Juán Almeida. Almeida indulged the headstrong youth with a warning to "stop talking as you do," but once back in Havana, Moore was "detailed" by the revolutionary police and tossed into a new jail made from a converted mansion on the city's outskirts. He was released a few weeks later with no charge or explanation and eventually found work in another branch of the government. But in late 1962, after some months of increasing disquiet about the revolution's puritanical excesses—with police sending homosexuals to labor camps and forcibly shuttering Afro-Cuban social clubs—Moore encountered his old nemesis in the Foreign Ministry. Furious that the young *negrito* was still at large, the bureaucrat promised to ensure that Moore was "take[n] care of" for good. That afternoon Moore knocked at the door of the Havana embassy of the new West African nation of Guinea and requested asylum; a few weeks later he left Cuba on a freighter bound for Africa. Eventually settling in Paris, he went on to write *Castro, the Blacks, and Africa* (1989), a controversial radical critique of the revolution's race mores whose exaggerated animus, given the experiences related in Moore's more personal and worthwhile memoir, is perhaps now clearer at its source.

When Moore went into exile in the early 1960s, most Cubans who fled the island belonged to its white upper classes. The arch-right-wingers among them nurtured a deep anger about Castro's "giving it all away" to the riffraff and *pichónes*. Their story is perhaps less tragic than that of exile families with more liberal pasts like the Bacardis, owners of the eponymous liquor empire, whose story Tom Gjelten traces in his splendid family chronicle *Bacardi and the Long Fight for Cuba*. The tale begins with the penniless Catalan immigrant Facundo Bacardi's discovering, in the 1860s, a new way to distill sugar cane into clear white rum. His son Emilio Bacardi became a key ally of José Martí in the fight for independence in the 1890s, and the Bacardis' 1950s heirs were fervid Fidel supporters—but then left the island and became fervid Castro-haters when he ordered a state takeover of the company they'd spent a century building from scratch. (One of Fidel's great claims to revolutionary virtue is that he did not spare his own parents' *latifundio* from being nationalized and split up in the first agrarian reform.) Family sagas about seized storehouses and abandoned mansions compose the sacred text of mainstream Cuban-exile politics. But as stories like Carlos Moore's show, belonging to a class of Cubans whose lot the revolution improved granted no exemption from being tyrannized by party discipline and hierarchy.

With the US market for Cuban sugar uncertain, Fidel's doubts about Leninism disappeared.

When Fidel Castro took command of Havana in January 1959, few in or outside Cuba knew much about him beyond his magnetism and rousing oratory; apart from Castro's loathing of Batista and idolizing of Martí, his politics—as the Eisenhower administration's "watch and wait" approach to his government shows—were vague even to close observers. Soon enough, his strident nationalism and messianic bent were clear. But even as Castro's government began seizing lands owned by US companies as part of its first agrarian reform in June 1959—and powerful Washington interests began urging Eisenhower to respond by ending the long-standing US agreement to purchase most of Cuba's sugar—few foresaw the antagonisms and escalation to come.

With Cuba's continued access to the chief market for its main crop looking unsure, and radicals like Che Guevara at Fidel's ear, whatever doubts Castro had about Leninism disappeared. In February 1960 a delegation of Soviet ministers arrived in Havana and signed an agreement to purchase much of Cuba's sugar; Che traveled to Moscow a short while later to secure Havana's ties to the Eastern Bloc. Three years after Khrushchev had promised "we will bury you," the Soviets had established a Communist beachhead in easy range of Florida, on an island, moreover, that the United States had regarded as an *amour propre*. The trauma was deep. In Washington a flurry of panicked recriminations over how this could have been allowed to happen—traced by Lars Schoultz with insightful verve in *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic*, a comprehensive history of US-Cuba relations since World War II—was translated into an ill-conceived CIA-sponsored invasion in April 1961. The Bay of Pigs fiasco did Fidel the great favor of allowing him to oversee the defeat of imperialist invaders on Cuba's beaches. In the months following, the Kennedy administration hatched a tragicomic series of attempts to kill Castro with explosive seashells and poisoned cigars (a job for which the CIA contracted the president's old Havana pimp, Santo Trafficante, now in Miami). But no matter. In October 1962, Washington's worst fears were realized when a US spy plane over Cuba's countryside snapped photos of Soviet missile launchers nestled amid royal palms.

Whether or not the Cuban missile crisis was the most dangerous and direct confrontation of the cold war, it's clear that Cuba's role was that of pawn or prop. This did not comfort Castro, who harbored deep resentment when Khrushchev failed to consult him before Moscow agreed to remove its nuclear missiles—a reaction that reveals the particularly Cuban pathos of this puffed-up leader of a smallish island driven by the need to be treated and seen as head of a big powerful nation (or at least a sovereign one). The longstanding US irritation with Cuba, Schoultz observes, stems from its leaders' persistent denial of the base precept of political realism distilled in Thucydides' dictum that the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must. Schoultz presents his history as a "case study in the trials and tribulations of realism"—an investigation into how for the past fifty years a weak state has "gotten away" with standing up to

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its vastly stronger neighbor and how, conversely, the stronger was made to let the weaker do so.

For three decades, of course, a large part of how Cuba "stood up" to the US empire lay also in its becoming the client state of another empire. This truth did not prevent Cuba from becoming a new kind of symbol across a Latin America long frustrated by the condescension of its Northern hegemon. Across the hemisphere, the mythic story of Cuba—a miraculous fable about a merry band of longhairs who went into their country's mountains and a few years later swept into its capital on the shoulders of its poor—was one that women and men who loved justice would seek to re-create from El Salvador to Colombia to Bolivia and Peru. In Washington, conversely, a new guiding metaphor for Cuba emerged: that of a malignant cancer whose spread had to be contained at all costs. And so it was that many thousands of those Latin Americans who went to the continent's jungles during the '60s, '70s and '80s, some toting photos of Che and Fidel in their knapsacks, died awful deaths with those whose cause they raised, too often the "disappeared" victims of US-backed dictatorships and death squads.

Since the cold war's end, US policy mavens have argued over the extent to which those dark decades' abuses were, if not justifiable, understandable given the strategic threat posed by the prospect of another Soviet satellite in its "backyard." What the years since the USSR's fall have also laid bare, however, is the extent to which Washington's approach to Cuba itself has been driven by other than simply rational aims like containment. "Castro is not merely an adversary, but an enemy," a 1993 report from the US Army War College observes, "an embodiment of evil who must be punished for his defiance of the United States.... There is a desire to hurt the enemy that is mirrored in the malevolence that Castro has exhibited towards us." For US politicians in national campaigns, being "tough on Cuba" long ago took its place with being "a friend to Israel" as a sine qua non of victory. As Cuba's potential threat to US security has progressively dwindled to nearly nil, US antagonism toward its government has only deepened. The Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 codified the embargo as US law and was toughened in the Helms-Burton Act signed by Bill Clinton in 1996, which prohibited US companies from dealing with foreign firms engaged in business with Cuban property seized by the revolution, and also mandated that the embargo could not be lifted until such time as Cuba is run by a government "that does not include Fidel Castro or Raúl Castro."

More recently, George W. Bush, who owed his presidency to south Florida, used his office in 2004 to funnel $59 million in new funding to no-bid Miami-Cuban boondoggles like the propaganda networks Radio and TV Martí. He also moved to close one of the embargo's few loopholes by introducing strict limits on remittances Cuban-Americans may send to family members on the island and on the number of trips they may take to visit them. Bush also placed Cuba on the US list of "state sponsors of terror" (based on an alleged chemical weapons program whose existence his own State Department doubted) and, in the long run-up to the 2004 election, established, at the heart of the executive branch and under the chairmanship of Secretary of State Colin Powell, a Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba. It was charged with determining how "to hasten the end" of the Castro dictatorship and in May 2004 produced a report recommending, for example, that in the wake of an anticipated violent transition, Cuban schools be kept open "in order to keep children and teenagers off the streets."

> The embargo, says Lawrence Wilkerson, is 'the dumbest policy on the face of the earth.'

As Daniel Erikson shows in *The Cuba Wars*, a sharp and deeply reported account of dynamics informing US-Cuba policy since the Clinton administration, Castro's government was concerned that Cuba's involvement in Bush's "war on terror" would go beyond the United States' use of its imperial relic at Guantánamo Bay to hold certain prisoners beyond the jurisdiction of US courts. The Cubans "were really worried," Lawrence Wilkerson, longtime chief of staff to Colin Powell, tells Erikson of a visit he made to Havana just after leaving the State Department in 2005. "They wanted me first of all to assure them that we weren't going to invade." In the spring of 2003, Fidel Castro—practiced in paranoia, always more comfortable on a war footing than not—responded to the new provocations by ordering the trial for treason of some seventy-five "dissidents," some of whom were indeed Cubans being paid by the United States to tweak (if hardly, in practice, to destabilize) their government, but most of whose offenses amounted to writing articles and circulating petitions. Some fifty-odd of "the 75" remain jailed today.

In 2003 I was living in Havana, and as at so many other times when Cuba had become the subject of hyperventilated fits abroad, the arrests and diplomatic volleys were little more than background noise to the struggles of quotidian life. People who sought more food than allotted by their ration card broke the law daily. That spring, an architect I was friendly with began selling stolen shellfish to feed his family, and his cousin had taken to earning new clothes by satisfying the bedroom predilections of Italian sex tourists. More significant to Cubans than Washington's longstanding obsession with upending their government were concerns over what that government might do to repair a broken economy. Such grave ills aside, not a few Cubans remain proud that theirs is a poor country in which "no children sleep in the streets," as a propaganda billboard near my Havana apartment touted truly. The Communist Party enjoys significant support, especially in the *provincias*—where peasants fifty years ago lived in dirt-floored huts and still do so today, but now regard free healthcare for their parents and good schools for their kids as birthrights. More generally, it's open to debate whether the Cuban state's solicitude toward its young and its aged is "worth" the repression too often endured by everyone else. But from the standpoint of a failed fifty-year attempt by the United States to change the island's government by isolation, the salient facts about Cuba are that it enjoys good relations and strong economic ties to every other country in the hemisphere, including Canada (not to mention China and the European Union), and that it has a stable government, in evidently firm control of its military and police, which has carried off its recent change to a new head of state with apparently minimal fuss.

Raúl Castro—longtime head of Cuba's military, a dour party man—has, with the illness of his brother, been cast in the unlikely role of reformer. Many in Cuba express hope that Raúl's early gestures at reform, like his opening of the grounds of tourist hotels such as the Hotel Nacional to ordinary Cubans, may augur a larger opening of the Cuban economy. During the presidential campaign, Barack Obama called Raúl's bluff by suggesting that he'd be willing to sit down with Cuba's new leader with a view toward im-

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proving relations. Realists predictably think this prospect, like Raúl's proffering of Cuba's "willingness to discuss on equal footing the prolonged dispute" with the United States, is a nonstarter: Obama's secretary of state, back when she was not his head diplomat but primary rival, called his willingness to meet with "foreign dictators" like Cuba's new leader "irresponsible." But during its first weeks, the Obama administration—no doubt cognizant of polls showing that younger Cuban-Americans voice little support for the hardline stance of the past, and that even a symbolic thaw with Cuba would be an easy way to improve relations with the rest of Latin America—successfully marshaled a bill through Congress overturning Bush-era restrictions on family visits and remittances. All this move does is return the United States' Cuba policy to its 2003 status. But it was a key signal that a larger overhaul of the Cuba policy will be on the table in Obama's Washington. At April's Summit of the Americas, the president observed that Cuba's thousands of doctors dispersed throughout the region were "a reminder for us in the United States that if our only interaction with many of these countries is…military, then we may not be developing the connections that can, over time, increase our influence." Obama also declared that a "new beginning with Cuba" could be near. That initial signal, it seems, has been confirmed.

In 1891, José Martí, the most articulate of Cuban nationalists and also perhaps his generation's most perceptive writer on inter-American relations, wrote in *Nuestra América*, "One must not attribute, through a provincial antipathy, a fatal and inbred wickedness to the continent's fair-skinned nation simply because it does not speak our language, or see the world as we see it, or resemble us in its political defects, so different from our own." For many Cubans, the election of Obama represents an overcoming of political defects, and in his brown face they see not a "fair-skinned nation" but something of themselves; their hope is that Obama will be a leader free of many of his country's old neuroses. The ultimate test of those hopes will be ending the long-running embargo, which Wilkerson, expressing a widely held but rarely stated Washington view, called, in an interview with *GQ*, "the dumbest policy on the face of the earth." No less incontestable is a remark made in 1974 by the now-ailing *barbudo* in Havana, who recently expressed doubt that he'd live to see the end of Obama's first term. "We cannot move, nor can the United States," Fidel Castro observed in an interview. "Speaking realistically, someday some sort of ties will have to be established." ■

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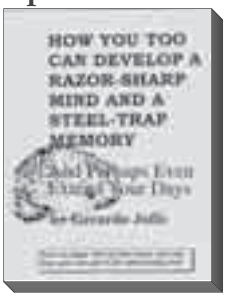

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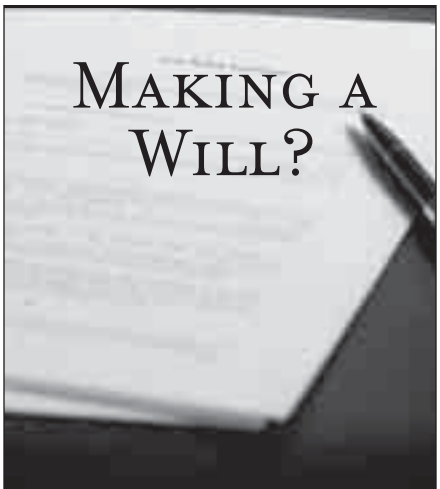

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On a Monday eternity finally begins
and the day that follows is scarcely named,
and the other is the dark, the done.
On that day are extinguished all whispers
and the face we loved dissolves in mist—
hope becomes hopeless: no one is coming.
Eternity knows nothing of our habits,
indifferent to red and the softest blue, it prefers
gray, smoke, ashes. You scratch
a name and a date on a piece of marble
and it rubs them out
with a careless shoulder, not even
a pinch of bitterness left behind. Yet see,
I cling to Mondays
and I give the next your name;
in total darkness I write
with the tip of my cigarette:
here have I lived.

ELISEO DIEGO (1920–94)
(Translated from the Spanish by Mark Weiss)

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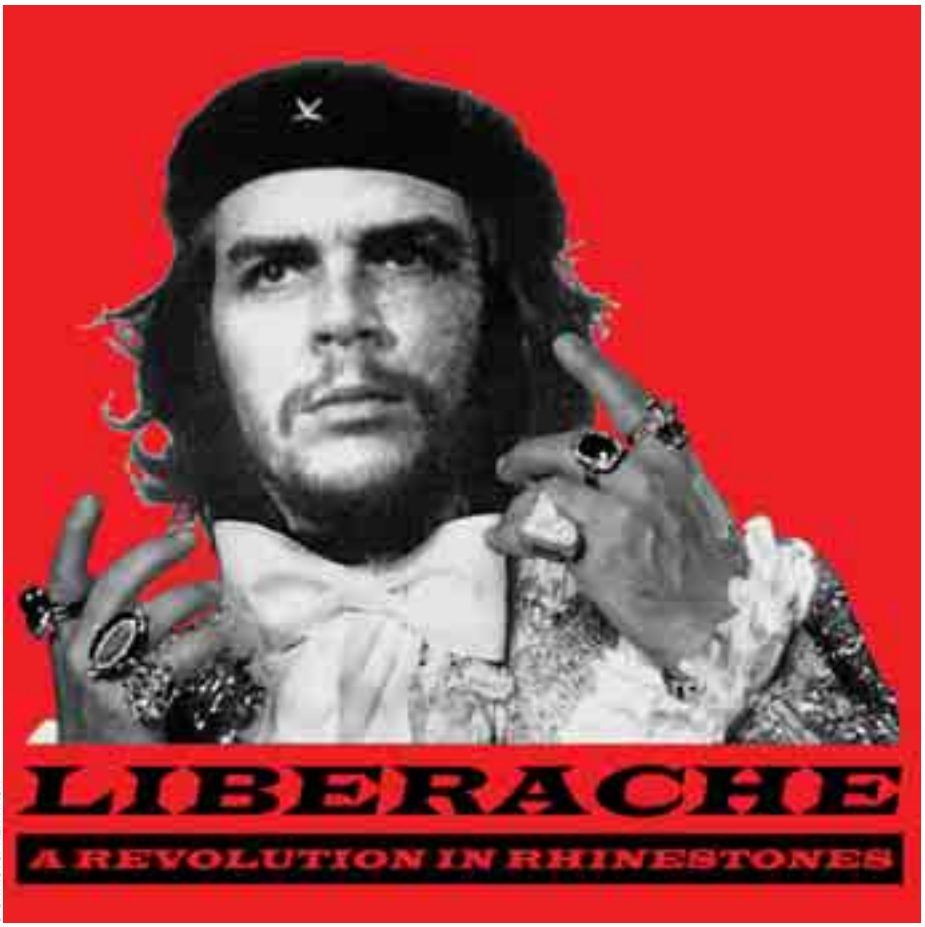

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"LiberaChe" T-shirt design by Christopher Nash

Afterimages

by MAURICE ISSERMAN

On October 9, 1967, a Bolivian army communiqué from La Paz announced that Ernesto "Che" Guevara, the Argentine-born Cuban revolutionary *comandante* turned itinerant guerrilla, had been hunted down by soldiers and killed in battle. The *New York Times* responded editorially, and with evident satisfaction, that if the report proved true, "as now seems probable," then "a myth as well as a man has been laid to rest." It was not the *Times*'s most accurate prediction.

Photographs of Che's lifeless body soon appeared in newspapers around the globe, putting to rest doubts about his death. Perhaps the most famous image was one taken by Freddy Alborta, showing Che's corpse being displayed to the press by Bolivian army officers. Yet controversy over the circumstances of Che's death continued to brew. Was he killed in combat, or in cold-blooded execution? The latter. Did the soldiers who killed him amputate and preserve his hands and then cremate the body? His amputated hands were smuggled to Cuba in 1970, and his bones were discovered by a Cuban forensic team in Bolivia in 1997 and returned to Cuba for state burial.

Che's Afterlife
The Legacy of an Image.
By Michael Casey.
Vintage. 388 pp. Paper $15.95.

In *Che's Afterlife: The Legacy of an Image*, Michael Casey reports that local peasant women who paraded by Che's corpse on October 9 with the permission of triumphant Bolivian officers "surreptitiously clipped locks of hair from Che's head, saving themselves a future talisman." A few weeks later, the journalist and novelist Jose Yglesias, reporting on Che's death for *The Nation*, indulged his readers with a different sort of memorabilia. Yglesias wrote that like the relics of St. Teresa of Avila, a sixteenth-century Carmelite nun and mystic, Che's hands "may well be with us for a long time to strengthen the nonreligious but barefoot Order—like Saint Teresa's stoical Carmelites—of the guerrillas of South America." The mythic appeal of the slain revolutionary, known to many today in Latin America as "San Ernesto," has only grown in subsequent years. "Unwittingly, the Bolivian military delivered the world a lasting and sympathetic picture of the man they'd hunted down," Casey writes. "They gave it a crucified Che." Indeed, John Berger and other art critics have argued that Freddy Alborta's photo of Che's corpse bears a startling resemblance to Renaissance depictions of Jesus Christ at the moment he was brought down from the cross by the Romans.

Che hardly ever sat for a bad photo—even in death. But of all surviving photographs of him, one in particular stands out: the head-and-shoulders portrait of a bearded, long-haired, 31-year-old Che, wearing a bomber jacket and his trademark beret emblazoned with the *comandante* star. Casey makes this image the central concern of *Che's Afterlife*, and in the book's opening chapter he offers a vivid re-creation of the "frozen millisecond" when the photo was taken. The date was March 5, 1960; the location a spot near Havana's Colón cemetery; the occasion a public funeral sponsored by the revolutionary government. The previous day a French munitions ship delivering arms to Cuba had mysteriously blown up in Havana harbor, killing scores of people and wounding hundreds. CIA involvement was suspected but never proven. Che, who had been at a meeting nearby in downtown Havana when the ship exploded, rushed to the docks and helped provide medical aid to the wounded and the dying.

On March 5, Che was standing on the speaker's platform while Castro harangued the crowd. He was gazing upon the assembly when photographer Alberto "Korda" Díaz Gutiérrez snapped a picture of him for *Revolución*, the official newspaper of Castro's 26th of July Movement. At the moment the shutter clicked, Che was hunched inside his bomber jacket against the unseasonable cold of that March day. The tension in his posture, combined with his piercing gaze ("angry and grieved" was the impression that Korda had of his subject's mood), made for a formally dynamic image. Citing art historian David Kunzle, Casey notes the "aesthetic magnets" of hair, beard and star, all of which both "steer

Maurice Isserman was a big fan of Che Guevara circa 1967–68. He is James L. Ferguson Professor of History at Hamilton College and the author, with Michael Kazin, of America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s *(third edition, 2007).*

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the eye's attention" when looking at the photograph and "provide reference points for derivative art," allowing for simplified forms of "mass reproduction as a two-tone icon."

Korda knew he had taken a good picture, but his editors failed to agree: the photograph did not run in the following day's *Revolución*. Over the next few years it would enjoy only a few low-key appearances in Cuban periodicals. Eventually, someone in a position of influence recognized the image's iconic possibilities. Shortly before Che's death, the photo—by then known as "Guerrillero Heroico"—was made a centerpiece of official Cuban propaganda. It adorned the hall at an international gathering of artists and writers in Havana in May 1967 and later that summer was displayed at the founding meeting of the Organization of Latin American Solidarity (OLAS). Korda's "Guerrillero Heroico" became routinely coupled with Che's famous slogan calling on the international left to "create two, three…many Vietnams." In the aftermath of Che's death, the Korda photo, or various graphic derivations, became a staple of radical newspapers and left-wing poster art in North and South America and Western Europe. And in an ironic post-1960s development, the image took on yet another life—this time as a marketing device, used to sell everything from air fresheners to condoms to an ice cream bar called Cherry Guevara.

Michael Casey, bureau chief for Dow Jones Newswires in Buenos Aires and a frequent correspondent for the *Wall Street Journal*, seems especially to relish the commercial taint of recent appropriations of Che's image, the "commoditization of an anti-capitalist rebel who opposed all that his hyper-commercialized image now represents." As Casey sees it, the issue is not that Che's image is without continuing political appeal but that it has too many diverse meanings to be the symbol of any coherent ideology. As one would expect, the Korda photo remains "the symbol of choice" for contemporary Latin American rebels, "wherever regional activists give the middle finger to the U.S.-backed free market system." It has also shown up in recent years as movement iconography in Palestine, Nepal, East Timor and many other locales caught up in radical insurgencies. But its appeal is not limited to conventional left-wing movements; it has been embraced, for instance, by "U.S.-backed Christian rebels in Sudan who are fighting a Muslim regime." He argues shrewdly that the contemporary meaning of Che's image ultimately isn't about communism or anti-imperialism: it's about attitude, and it's about sacrifice. "A man, a teacher, lays down a code of personal conduct from which to build a just society, a utopia, and then proceeds to live and die according to it."

The contemporary meaning of Che's image isn't about anti-imperialism: it's about attitude.

In *Che's Afterlife*, we learn almost as much about the photographer who captured the image "Guerrillero Heroico" as we do of its subject. Before the revolution, Korda established a reputation as Cuba's best fashion photographer, and his studio became "a meeting place for the beautiful people of Havana." As someone who devoted his leisure hours to collecting models, actresses and fine automobiles (an MG convertible and a Porsche), Korda might have seemed a likely prospect for an early exodus to Miami after Castro and Che's triumph in 1959; instead, he "made a surprisingly smooth transition from the world of glamorous models and film stars to that of Castro's scrappy soldiers." But perhaps the transition wasn't a surprise since, as Casey suggests, revolutionary Havana retained a streak of hedonism for a few years amid the asceticism of the new order: "If Korda's extravagant lifestyle ran counter to the discipline of Che Guevera," he writes, "it was in keeping with the mood of the early years of the revolution." *Revolución*, where many of Korda's photos appeared, favored a freewheeling iconoclasm, with "a bright, distinctly American aesthetic" that "borrowed some of the sex appeal of pre-revolutionary Cuba and planted it in the framework of what many assumed would be a politically liberating new era."

Unfortunately, that promise would go unrealized as Communist Cuba hardened in the shadow of its Soviet big brother. In the early days of the new regime—and in a moment most at odds with the Guerrillero Heroico legend—Che did a stint as a prison commander at La Cabaña fort in Havana, where a number of political prisoners were executed. (Estimates of the victims range widely, from a few hundred to many thousands.) Many of *Revolución*'s editors and writers would themselves become exiles before the decade was over. As for Korda, he remained a revolutionary true believer throughout the difficult years that followed. He also became a savvy enough legal tactician to succeed in reclaiming the property rights of his famous photo and some of the profits generated by its unexpected commercial success in the late twentieth century. In a September 2000 legal settlement, an ad agency in Britain agreed to pay $75,000 for unauthorized use of "Guerrillero Heroico" in a Smirnoff vodka advertisement, and Korda donated the money to the Cuban healthcare system. The court's decision removed the photo from the public domain, establishing the aging photographer as the clear copyright owner. Korda died the next year, leaving various Cuban heirs to squabble over the newly valuable estate.

Casey has gotten hold of a good story and has some interesting things to say about it. His later chapters, exploring the meaning of Che's "afterlife" in contemporary Argentina, Venezuela, Bolivia and Miami, are his most original, packed with reports of fascinating encounters with Che admirers, cultists, exploiters and vilifiers. Particularly gripping is his interview in Miami with Felix Rodríguez, a CIA agent sent to Bolivia in 1967 to train the troops fighting against Che's small band of guerrillas, who encountered the commander in captivity on his last day alive. According to Rodríguez's autobiography, *Shadow Warrior* (1989), after failing to persuade the Bolivians to spare their captive's life, he embraced Che before his execution. "His moment of truth had come, and he was conducting himself like a man. He was facing death with courage and grace." Casey is agnostic on the question of whether the CIA really wanted Che kept alive, though he signals some skepticism by noting that Rodríguez had spent "a life that constantly skirted the shadier moments of US history," including the Bay of Pigs, attempts on Castro's life and involvement with the Nicaragua Contras. In his interview with Casey, Rodríguez reiterates his admiration for the doomed revolutionary: "Look at what people write: The far right say that he was crying, which wasn't true. And then on the other hand, you have the far left saying that I tried to slap him in the face and that he spat on me, which is also not true.… The man conducted himself with respect to the very end. No matter what, everybody has to respect that."

There's much to like about *Che's Afterlife*, but the book would have benefited greatly from a sturdier historical frame. Perhaps reflecting his training as a business reporter, Casey seems overly enamored with the language of advertising

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and consumption. The popularization of Che's image, he writes, was "one of the Cuban revolution's greatest marketing accomplishments." On October 18, 1967, standing before an enormous reproduction of "Guerrillero Heroico" in downtown Havana, Castro delivered a speech eulogizing Che as a role model and hero. Casey describes the event as a "brand launch":

> There, in the Plaza de la Revolución, the Cuban revolution's world headquarters, its leader converted the hitherto little-known Korda image into a powerful mnemonic, a lasting logo. Castro combined the Cuban revolution, Che's stellar qualities, and the Guerrillero Heroico image into a single attractive product.... Just as urban sneaker-wearing teenagers seem susceptible these days to advertisers who encourage them to identify with brands such as Nike or Tommy Hilfiger, in late 1967 radicalized students across the Western world were ripe for the Che brand.

The flaw of Casey's approach is not its irreverence or its cynicism—both of which might seem to be merited by the less than inspiring outcome of the Cuban Communist experiment—but rather its ahistoricism. Che was not, in fact, an unknown "brand" in student circles in the Western world that burst upon the scene in October 1967 like a hot new rock group (or a snazzy and well-promoted pair of sneakers). There is no indication in *Che's Afterlife* that Casey has read *Where the Boys Are: Cuba, Cold War America and the Making of a New Left* (1993), in which historian Van Gosse argues for the inspirational role of the Cuban Revolution for at least some American New Leftists at the very start of the 1960s. Casey does not mention either C. Wright Mills's influential and best-selling polemic *Listen, Yankee: The Revolution in Cuba* (1960), widely read in student circles in those years, or Malcolm X's praise of Che as "one of the most revolutionary men in this country right now," when the Cuban leader visited New York City in 1964 and denounced racism in South Africa and the American South in an address to the United Nations.

Casey's determination to pinpoint the moment of the "brand launch" of "Guerrillero Heroico" is simply irrelevant to the actual political history of the 1960s. Even though the image had gone unpublished outside obscure Cuban newspapers, the mainstream American media, as well as the radical press, had kept Che's name and face in the public eye for years: from his days as Castro's sidekick, to his disappearance from view in Cuba in 1965, to his life as an international man of mystery until October 9, 1967. *The New York Times Magazine*, for instance, ran a four-page feature story in 1966 with the headline ¿Dónde Está? Whatever Became of Che? Although critical of Che's politics, the article—unmentioned in Casey's account—quoted a recent graduate of Santo Domingo University in the Dominican Republic who called the vanished revolutionary "the purest of the pure," someone who "hasn't been corrupted by power." The Dominican student concluded, "I bet right now he is fighting the oligarchs and the *yanquis* not far from our country." The subsequent launch of the Che brand is already encapsulated in those words, which have nothing whatsoever to do with the marketing instincts of the Castro regime.

Casey also displays an uncertain grasp of US history in the late 1960s, claiming that "the culture and politics of the '68 youth movement in the United States were dominated by the antiwar, pro-peace hippies." Casey believes that the version of Che embraced by the American left in 1968 had been thoroughly defanged by peaceniks. There were certainly lots of hippies involved in antiwar activism in 1968; but there were

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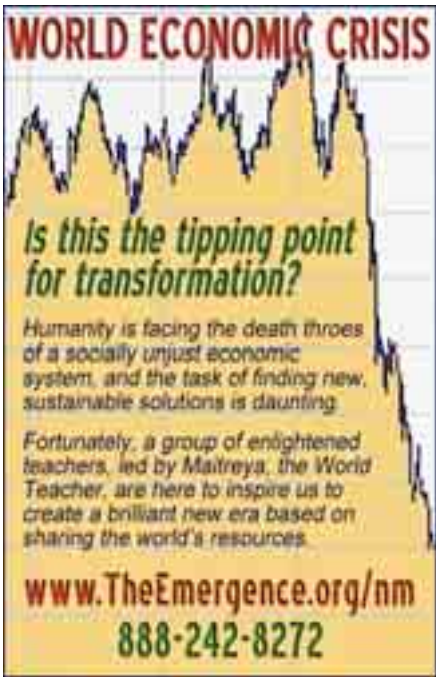
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Doris Shaffer

A cherished member of *The Nation* family, Doris Shaffer passed away peacefully on June 2 in her Manhattan home at the age of 80. The daughter of a leather goods worker and an elementary teacher, Doris was a founding member of ACLU's Nassau chapter, obtained her M.A. in history from New York University and taught history at Nassau Community College for 28 years. She married fellow student activist Don Shaffer in 1949. Both were active members of *The Nation*'s Circle of 100 partnership. Doris played a pivotal role in the development of The Nation Institute, and provided the Shaffer Fellowship, held by Katha Pollitt. In addition, she supported the ACLU, the Center for Constitutional Rights, SANE/Peace Action, Peace Now and New Israel Fund. We mourn the loss of our old friend and extend condolences to her family. The memorial service is on Sunday, June 14, 3 p.m. at the New York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West. Contributions may be sent to any of the above organizations.

James (Jim) Anthony Mink, born 12/24/1922 to John and Helen in Nesquehoning, PA. Died 05/25/2009 in Oakland, CA, of Parkinson's Disease. Preceded in death by both parents, Joe, Eddie, John F. (brothers), and Joanne (wife). Survived by John A. Mink (son), Mary-Louise Ganley, Anna Quinn (sisters), Eduardo Barranco (best friend), nieces+nephews. WWII vet, pacifist, lifelong activist, NYU grad, avid skiier, fly fisherman, NPS ranger at Mt. Rainier and more, teacher (Fremont High, Oakland), sketch artist, loving husband to Joanne (Vairo) Mink (d. 1991) and father to John A Mink (b. 1974). An existentialist, Jim wanted no funeral. Contributions in Jim's honor can be sent to The National Parkinson Foundation. To contact John A. Mink (son): johngeek@gmail.com

also lots of intensely political radicals in groups like Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)—the first unmentioned in *Che's Afterlife*, the second appearing only in a footnote. And, for better or worse, these radicals already knew a great deal about Comandante Guevera, and they weren't engaged in any of the "softening" Casey attributes to the hippie peaceniks. Greg Calvert, SDS national secretary, told a reporter from the *New York Times* in May 1967 that "Che's message is applicable to urban America as far as the psychology of guerrilla action goes.... Che sure lives in our hearts." Two months later, in July 1967, SNCC chair Stokely Carmichael traveled to Havana, where he was elected as an honorary delegate to the founding meeting of OLAS. According to the account published in the *Times*, "Mr. Carmichael said that he had decided to come to Cuba because of a message last April attributed to the vanished Cuban guerrilla leader, Maj. Ernesto ('Che') Guevara. This message called on Latin-American revolutionaries to create two, three or more Vietnams. He said that the guerrilla leader was an inspiration to American Negroes." Following the Columbia University student strike in April 1968, SDS founder Tom Hayden adapted Che's "two, three" Vietnams slogan to the struggle on American campuses in a manifesto published in *Ramparts* calling for the creation of "Two, Three, Many Columbias."

Casey also lacks a basic understanding of the chronology of the era. "Especially after the death of Martin Luther King on April 4, 1968," he writes, "civil rights leaders such as Stokely Carmichael, Eldrige [*sic*] Cleaver, and Malcolm X became vocal advocates of a more militant struggle for black Americans." Malcolm, of course, had been assassinated more than three years before King (and shortly after praising Che), while Carmichael and Cleaver had been vocal advocates of "militant struggle" for quite some time before April 1968. For the sake of his pet marketing analysis, Casey seems to want to infantilize and trivialize all '60s radicals, depicting them as just so many naïve groupies bowled over by the Guerrillero Heroico consumer style: "Guevara the warrior fit the hippie stereotype of beauty—strong and handsome, but sensitive and loving at the same time." No doubt there were youthful communards who pinned silk-screened posters of Che on the wall next to one of Jimi Hendrix and couldn't quite tell the two apart after a few tokes of Panama Red. But is that really the appeal and meaning Che held for Carmichael or Hayden—neither one a hippie softie—or their numerous followers?

Casey can't answer the question, because his study lacks a comparative dimension. Che's image was not uniquely popular among Western radicals in the 1960s—it was not the undisputed "defining icon" of the era, as Casey would have it. There was the famous photo of Malcolm X in full rhetorical flight, finger pointing in accusation. There was Huey Newton sitting in a wicker chair, with a rifle in one hand and an African spear in the other. There were anonymous Vietcong soldiers, men and women, clutching AK-47s, the Guerrilleros Heroicos of another struggle, their images a regular feature in the pages of *New Left Notes* and similar publications. There were even enough posters of Chairman Mao to provoke the Beatles to sing in 1968, "If you go carrying pictures of Chairman Mao/You ain't going to make it with anyone, anyhow." Could John Lennon not think of anything to rhyme with "Che"?

Jose Yglesias died in 1995, late enough to have watched the Che myth evolve through its later manifestations but too soon to have seen an undoubted expert on the subject also use religious imagery to define Che's legacy. On the occasion of John Paul II's 1998 visit to Cuba, where he preached in a Havana plaza dominated by a steel sculpture of the "Guerrillero Heroico" visage, a journalist is reported to have asked the pope for his thoughts on Che Guevara, a "protagonist in recent Cuban history." His Holiness is said to have replied, "He is now before God's Tribunal. Let's let our Lord judge his merits. I am certain that he wanted to serve the poor."

Che was a hard man—a fighter, a zealot, an idealist with blood on his hands. History is full of similar figures—Oliver Cromwell, John Brown, Leon Trotsky. And yet I still understand why some of their examples, and especially Che's, might appeal to contemporary young activists (and ones far less bloody-minded than I once was). Even Casey rejects the idea that those drawn to Korda's photo in the twenty-first century can be classified simply as the useful idiots of a failed totalitarian experiment or, contradicting his earlier emphasis on style and marketing, as passive consumers of Che's charismatic appeal: "It is not only Guevara's high cheekbones, long eyelashes and cool bomber jacket that make this photo desirable. Its appeal also lies in its spirituality, in its ability to feed people's longings for a better world and to encourage them to dream of defeating death.... Korda's Che keeps hope alive." ■

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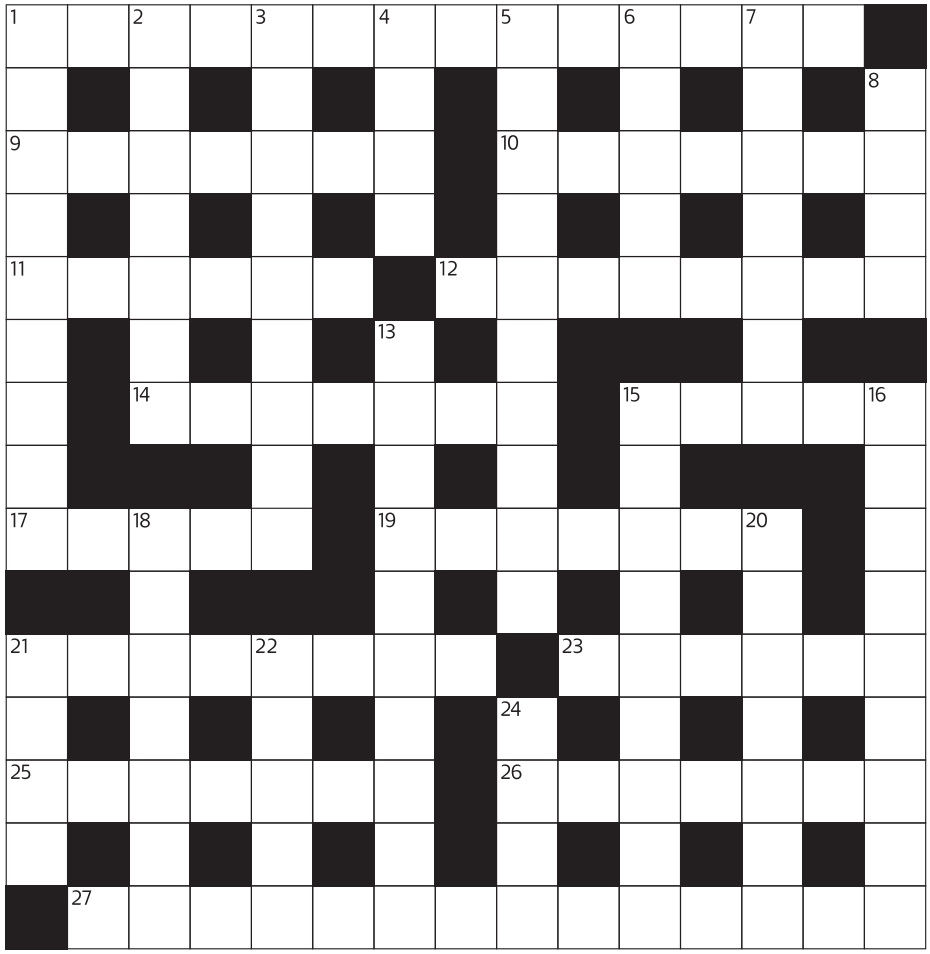

ACROSS

1 The possible brunt of little iron bands were fired by ancient priests. (5,9)

9 Is a one-legged person this on a hot day, or just about to summarize? (2,5)

10 Hello, pal! I neglected to find the appearance of an oil slick. (7)

11 Does the sideways drift show a general the path? (6)

12 With a small measure I make an impression, but it's something unintended. (8)

14 The sounds of the ruler striking, or just the Women's Army Corps of Kansas losing direction? (7)

15 Crazed bears! But it could be worse! (5)

17 The wandering tribe finds a Roman flower. (5)

19 Shakily sign it with a point, as one causes a flare-up. (7)

21 Were they unsteady on their pins, these bands of workers? (8)

23 Pale yellow bog surrounding Los Angeles International Airport. (6)

25 Gee, that's tough! But it's just material for the mill to the French. (7)

26 I am a spirit, to a point, but Mr. Lennon recommends we do it! (7)

27 Drive! Gives gears four points to prove it! (14)

DOWN

1 Although sick in mind, confused, it fits to a T and shows surpassing intelligence. (9)

2 Miss Franklin tells you what it means to her. (7)

3 Was romantic Paris the cause of it all? It's Greek to me! (6,3)

4 8 down is confused by karma! (4)

5 Dispatching the unholy sounds like it's good for you! (10)

6 A modern Mesopotamian? (5)

7 Its gear, if broken, will cover the limbs. (7)

8 Sounds as if they belong beneath your ankles, but it's quite an accomplishment! (4)

13 If split in chopped cress, you'd get Bartlebys. (10)

15 Used in 3 down? No—centuries later, but no one wants to meet her! (6-3)

16 They take it back concerning the horses' gaits. (9)

18 Dylan meets Crosby going up and down. (7)

20 Sixty degrees of separation? (You are one or the other of this on a small slab.) (7)

21 Wit, to a point, makes the bread, as they say. (4)

22 Dead, right? Not now! (5)

24 The end is in sight, if in confusion. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 3174

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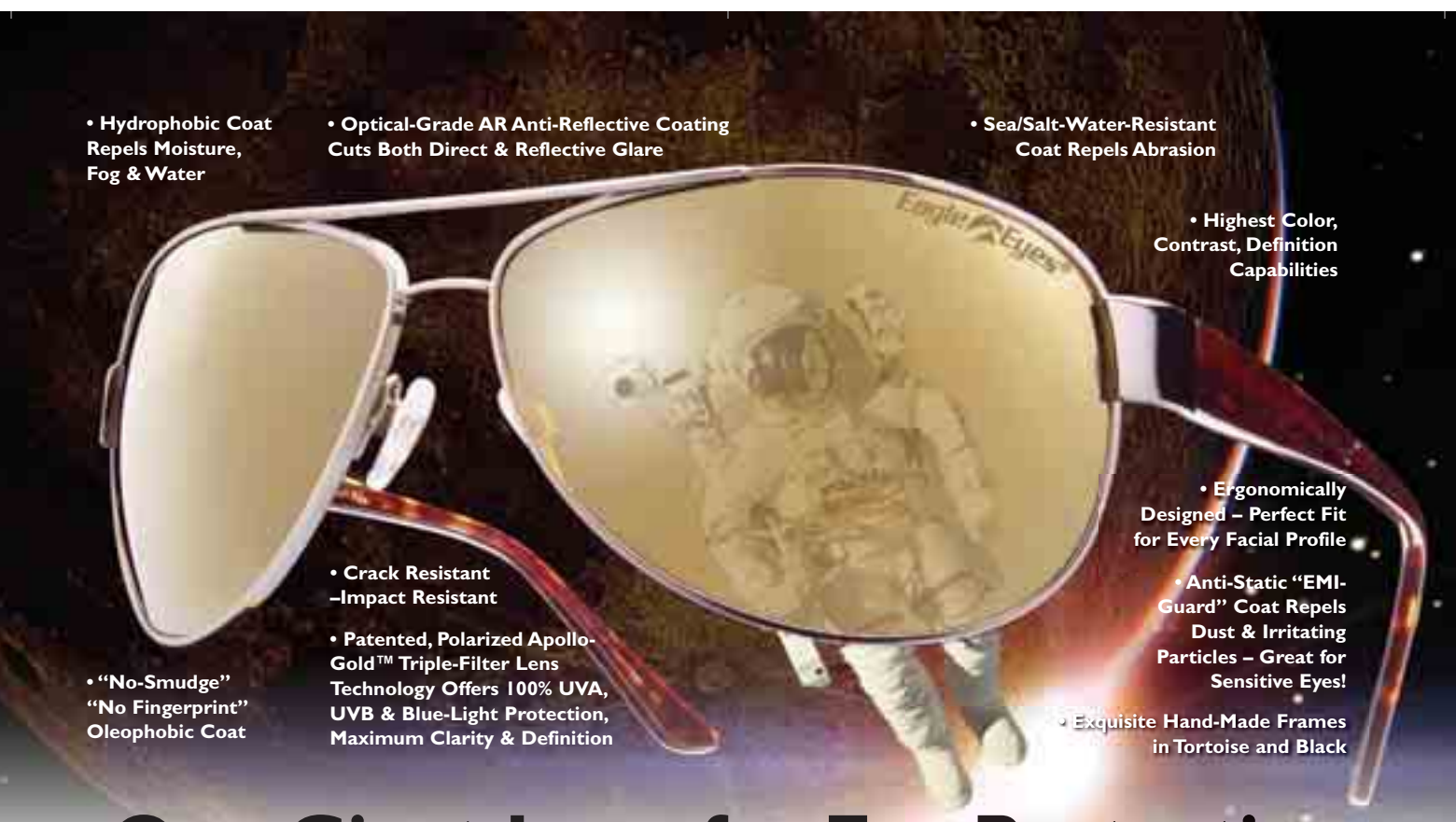
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NASA scientists looked to nature for a solution to eye protection which led them to their studies on how eagles can simultaneously distinguish their prey from their surroundings with utmost precision, while protecting their eyes from sunlight. NASA scientists independently replicated this same technology into Eagle Eyes® **Apollo Gold**™ optical sunglasses, serious sun-protection that offers **12 distinct performance levels** in a single lens. Eagle Eyes® **Apollo Gold**™ patented, polarized lens technology was tested to enhance vision while protecting from the sun's harmful UVA, UVB radiation and blue-light.

Unparalleled clarity. With their patented triple filtering system, Eagle Eyes® reduces the blinding glare you may encounter while driving or enjoying outside activities. This technology produces unparalleled visual clarity, contrast and definition and blocks the harsh UV light while enhancing the colors of your environment. All of this with a "no smudge"/no fingerprint oleophobic coating.

Who Better to Know About the Best UV Eye Protection than America's Astronauts?

"I have worn the EAGLE EYES® brand for years and depend upon their superb capabilities in UV eye protection, glare reduction and vision-enhancement."

— WALTER CUNNINGHAM, APOLLO-7 ASTRONAUT

Developed from Original NASA Optic Technology, EAGLE EYES® is the ONLY Sunglass Lens Certified by the SPACE FOUNDATION for UVR & Blue-Light Protection

The Eagle Eyes® **Apollo Gold**™ frames feature an aggressive ergonomic design with 2X scratch-resistant coatings, affording maximum durability while maintaining crack and impact resistance. You will also receive one soft zipper case and a micro-fiber cleaning pouch & cloth with anti-fog cleaner so you can carry and protect your Eagle Eyes® in style. Plus, if you are not thrilled with the Eagle Eyes® **Apollo Gold**™ technology, simply return them within 30 days for a full refund of your purchase price.

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